

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Saturday, March 22, 2014

SIGN OF THE TIMES



Crimea Goes East, Ukraine Goes West in 2 New Deals

People watch fireworks at the central Lenin square in Simferopol, Crimea, on Friday, March 21, 2014. Russian President Vladimir Putin completed the annexation of Crimea on Friday, signing a law making the Black Sea peninsula part of Russia. (AP Photo/Ivan Sekretarev)

Michelle Obama begins good-will tour in China

JANE PERLEZ

© 2014 New York Times

BEIJING - Michelle Obama, on the first day of a good-will tour to China with her daughters and her mother, tried her hand Friday at three quintessentially Chinese specialties: calligraphy, table tennis and mathematics.

Her hostess was China's first lady - though strictly speaking there is no such title in China - Peng Liyuan, the wife of President Xi Jinping and a glamorous, nationally known singing star.

The meeting was expected to be a show of spontaneity and broad smiles, the bonding of two women with big personalities who rose from humble backgrounds and who would have much in common as they toured a high school and visited the Forbidden City in the heart of Beijing. But instead, like some aspects of the formal and often fraught relationship between the two countries, the encounter was a little stiff, and certainly on the part of Peng, subdued.

Dressed in a severely tailored blue suit and laced-up black high-heel ankle boots, she appeared not quite accustomed to a role that is closely controlled by top Communist

Party operatives and avidly scrutinized on Chinese social media.

In a class on calligraphy at Beijing Normal School, a prestigious state-run secondary school, Obama,

drew the eight strokes. Peng, in one of the few phrases she used in English, said: "I'll give it a try," and wrote a four-character Chinese saying, "Only people of great virtue are

The two women admired robots that the students had built using elements of mathematics, science, engineering and art.

In the table tennis class, Obama shed the vest of



First lady Michelle Obama, her mother Marian Robinson, Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan during a photo session at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing, March 21, 2014. Michelle Obama, on the first day of a good-will tour to China with her daughters and mother, toured several locations with Peng Liyuan.

(Andy Wong/Pool via The New York Times)

brush in hand and paper in front of her, tried to write the Chinese character for the word eternity. "Push harder," urged Liu Yijie, a student, as she tentatively

suitably undertake great things." As she wrote, she conceded in Chinese: "I'm pretty nervous too." Then she presented her work to Obama.

her casual pantsuit and took paddle in hand. After a few strokes, she got the hang of it, hit some volleys and wrapped her game to applause. "My husband

plays. He thinks he's better than he really is," she said. The high school was chosen for Obama's visit because it emphasizes the value of education abroad: 30 American students are studying there this year, and many of the Chinese students are expected to go to college in the United States. The American students pay \$50,000 a year with students enrolled this year from elite East Coast schools, including Choate in Connecticut and Sidwell Friends in Washington, which the Obama daughters, Malia and Sasha, attend.

Obama, her daughters and mother, Marian Robinson, were given a special tour of the Forbidden City with Peng that was brisk - less than an hour - and devoid of Chinese tourists in the areas where they walked. On a normal day, 30,000 tourists mill through the vast courtyards but the crowds were pared down to 5,000, a Chinese official said. Obama's appearance in China would likely prove an eye-opener for many ordinary Chinese, said Zhang Lifan, a professor of Chinese modern history. "In China, it is very unlikely that a minority person could be a leader of the country, or a first lady," said Zhang. "Ordinary citizens will see the U.S. system has more opportunity for ethnic minorities to rise and have opportunities."

On social media sites, the visit was greeted with a mixture of approval and skepticism. A former head of education in Yunnan province said on Sina Weibo, which is similar to Twitter, that "the cons outweigh the pros when it comes to first ladies becoming involved in politics." Others commented on how Obama was greeted by a blue, pollution-free sky. "Now Michelle's here, it's immediately bright and blue again." By Friday evening, Peng had come into her own, hosting a private dinner and a performance at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse for the Obama family. □

'Extraordinary riddle' of lost jet now 2 weeks old

KRISTEN GELINEAU

ROB GRIFFITH

Associated Press

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Aircraft and ships from China headed to the desolate southern Indian Ocean to join the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, now lost for two full weeks, and Australia promised its best efforts to resolve "an extraordinary riddle."

A satellite spotted two large objects in the area earlier this week, raising hopes of finding the Boeing 777 that disappeared March 8 with 239 people on board. Three Australian planes took off at dawn Saturday for a third day of scouring the region about 2,500 kilometers (1,550 miles) southwest of Perth. Australian officials tried to

tamp down expectations after a fruitless search Friday, even as they pledged to continue the effort.

"It's about the most inaccessible spot that you could imagine on the face of the Earth, but if there is anything down there, we will find it," Prime Minister Tony Abbott said at a news conference in Papua New Guinea. "We owe it to the families and the friends and the loved ones of the almost 240 people on Flight MH370 to do everything we can to try to resolve what is as yet an extraordinary riddle," he added.

A total of six Australian aircraft were to search the region Saturday: two ultra long-range commercial jets and four P3 Orions, the Australian Maritime Safety

Authority said.

Two merchant ships were in the area, and the HMAS Success, a Navy supply ship, was due to arrive late Saturday afternoon. Weather in the search zone was expected to be relatively good, with some cloud cover.

Two Chinese aircraft are expected to arrive in Perth on Saturday to join the search, and two Japanese aircraft will arrive Sunday. A small flotilla of ships from China is still several days away. AMSA officials also were checking to see if there was any new satellite imagery that could provide more information.

Abbott spoke with Chinese President Xi Jinping, describing him as "devastated." The passengers in-

cluded 154 Chinese.

In Kuala Lumpur, where the plane took off for Beijing, Malaysian Defense Minister Hishammuddin Hussein thanked the more than two dozen countries involved in the overall search that stretches from Kazakhstan in Central Asia to the southern Indian Ocean. He called the whole process "a long haul."

The search area indicated by the satellite images in the southern Indian Ocean is a four-hour round-trip flight from western Australia, leaving planes with only enough fuel to search for about two hours. The images were taken March 16, but the search in the area did not start until Thursday because it took time to analyze them. □

Russia's aggression to dominate Obama Europe trip

JIM KUHNHENN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Pushing back against demands to supply arms to

ships as well as feature a high-profile audience with Pope Francis. But Russia's actions will now dominate Obama's visit as the presi-

tin's inner circle and a Russian bank and he signed an executive order that would allow the U.S. to sanction key Russian industries. U.S.

officials said Russia's energy, financial services and metals and mining sectors are among the industries that could be targeted.

On Friday, the European Union announced its own new sanctions, aiming for a deputy prime minister, two presidential advisers and the speakers of both houses of parliament. It also stated that further steps by Russia to destabilize Ukraine would lead to unspecified economic consequences and asked its members to prepare possible targets.

In that sense, the EU actions and threats against Russia fall short of the U.S. efforts, illustrating the European nations' caution over matching the U.S. measures against a country that is so intertwined with

their own economies as both a trading partner and energy supplier.

Sen. John McCain, a prominent Republican who recently returned from a trip to Ukraine, said the U.S. needs to provide financial aid to Ukraine, immediately send defensive weapons to the country, resume work on the missile defense system in Poland, develop a long-term plan to get energy to Europe and Ukraine and speak up for the people. Critics also say Obama has not been swift enough in imposing sanctions.

"This incrementalist approach is failing, and it will continue to fail," said Andrew Kuchins, the director of the Russia program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. □



National Security Adviser Susan Rice listens to reporters' questions during a briefing on President Barack Obama's upcoming trip to Europe and Saudi Arabia, Friday, March 21, 2014, in the Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House in Washington.

(AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

Ukraine, Obama administration officials said Friday that economic sanctions would remain the primary weapon as the U.S. and its European allies seek a diplomatic solution to Russia's aggression. "Our interest is not in seeing this situation escalate and devolve into hot conflict," Obama National Security Adviser Susan Rice said. "Our interest is in a diplomatic resolution, de-escalation and, obviously, economic support for Ukraine, and to the extent that it continues to be necessary, further cost imposed on Russia for its actions." President Barack Obama, traveling across the Atlantic next week, will seek a cohesive stance from European leaders unnerved by Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula but cautious about the economic punishment the United States says it's willing to unleash if Moscow makes further expansionist moves.

The trip, scheduled long before Russia moved to annex the Crimean Peninsula away from Ukraine, had initially aimed to nurture international relation-

dent and U.S. allies seek to confront one of the most serious political crises in Europe since the Cold War. Underscoring the gravity with which the United States and the West perceive Russia's intervention in Ukraine, Obama will meet with leaders of the Group of Seven leading economies on Monday to display a unified stance against Moscow.

"What will be clear for the entire world to see is that Russia is increasingly isolated, and that the United States is leading the international community in supporting the government of Ukraine and the people of Ukraine, and in imposing costs on Russia for its aggression against Ukraine," Rice said.

Secretary of State John Kerry will join Obama during his trip, which will include stops in The Hague, Netherlands; Rome; Vatican City; and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. While in The Hague, Kerry will meet with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Obama this week ordered sanctions against nearly two dozen members of Pu-

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Michigan ban on same-sex marriage struck down

ERIK ECKHOLM

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A federal judge in Detroit struck down Michigan's ban on same-sex marriage Friday, the latest in a string of court decisions across the country to rule that denying marriage to gay and lesbian couples is a violation of the Constitution.

"The guarantee of equal protection must prevail," wrote Judge Bernard A. Friedman of U.S. District Court.

It was not clear from the written decision, issued late Friday afternoon, whether same-sex couples in Michigan could immediately apply for marriage licenses. Friedman did not say whether he plans to delay implementation, as federal judges in other states have done, until the

state has a chance to appeal to the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, in Cincinnati.

The two-week trial, which ended March 7, drew special attention because it was the first in several years to include testimony from social-science researchers on the potential impact of same-sex marriage on families and children. The state, arguing that it would be risky to change the definition of marriage, cited studies that concluded that children raised by same-sex couples had worse outcomes in life.

Those challenging the ban argued that the studies had been widely discredited, and Friedman agreed, calling them deeply flawed. Lawyers for the plaintiffs described the



April DeBoer, left, and Jayne Rowse, listen to a question during a news conference in Ferndale, Mich., Friday, March 21, 2014. A federal judge has struck down Michigan's ban on gay marriage Friday the latest in a series of decisions overturning similar laws across the U.S. The two nurses who've been partners for eight years claimed the ban violated their rights under the U.S. Constitution. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

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scholars who appeared for the state as religiously motivated and part of a "desperate fringe," and subjected them to withering cross-examination. Scholars called to rebut the testimony described a virtual consensus in the field that other things like income and stability being equal, children fared just as well with same-sex parents.

The unusually extensive trial record could strengthen Friedman's ruling in the appeals process and could prove useful elsewhere as dozens of similar challenges to marriage restrictions enter state and federal courts. Friedman was appointed to the federal seat in the eastern district of Michigan in 1988 by President Ronald Reagan.

The Michigan attorney general also argued that it was wrong for federal courts to overturn a policy adopted by public referendum in 2004, and that Michigan voters should decide if change was needed. But Friedman ruled that state authority "cannot trump federal constitutional limitations."

The case was brought by April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse, nurses who live together in a Detroit suburb and who each adopted children born with special needs and are raising them as one family. They originally sued in 2012 to overturn a state law that prevents them, as unmarried parties, from adopting their three children as a couple. They wanted to do so to protect their parental interests in the event one of them dies.

They later expanded their suit to challenge the underlying obstacle - Michigan's ban on same-sex marriage or even civil unions. Since June, when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down part of the federal Defense of Marriage Act, federal judges in Utah, Oklahoma, Virginia, Texas and now Michigan have declared that state amendments and laws limiting marriage to a man and a woman are unconstitutional. The rulings are headed for circuit courts of appeal in coming months, putting pressure on the Supreme Court to revisit the issue. □

4 dead after fire destroys motel on Jersey Shore

MARC SANTORA

© 2014 New York Times

A fire swept through a motel on the Jersey Shore just before dawn Friday, killing four people and injuring eight others.

The two-story wooden motel, two blocks from the beach, was a popular destination for tourists during the summer. But it had also become something of a home for families still displaced after Hurricane Sandy.

Crystal Wardell, 26, was asleep in a first-floor room at the motel, the Mariner's Cove Motor Inn on Broadway in Point Pleasant Beach, when the fire started just before 5:30 a.m.

"We opened the door and the whole motel was engulfed in flames," she said. "It was an inferno."

The six members of the Wardell family staying at the motel were forced out of their rented home by Hurricane Sandy, which struck in October 2012, and have been staying in temporary lodgings ever since. They were living in two rooms, paying about \$200 a month for each

room.

A.J. Fox, chief of the Point Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department, said a half-dozen

rived, the entire structure was ablaze.

Firefighters tried to break through windows on

They were able to save one woman there.

"One of our firefighters from Point Pleasant Beach

sought shelter in a bathtub with the shower running, he said.

Early in the day the Ocean County prosecutor, Joseph D. Coronato, said the cause of the fire was still under investigation and authorities were sifting carefully through the wreckage because 10 guests could not immediately be located. Shortly before 4 p.m., the authorities said the last body had been recovered and they were shifting their focus to the investigation.

Al Della Fave, a spokesman in the prosecutor's office, said all the victims were men, but he did not release their names.

The fire was brought under control shortly after 7 a.m. Investigators were eventually able to pull a hard drive from the computer in the manager's office, get a complete record of who was at the motel and make sure no one was unaccounted for.

The motel had 25 units and could accommodate 100 people. Coronato said officials believed that about 40 people were in the motel at the time of the fire. □



Firefighters remove the body of a victim of a pre-dawn fire at a motel in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J., March 21, 2014. The Mariner's Cove Motor Inn, a summertime tourist spot that had also become a home to families still displaced by Hurricane Sandy, was totally gutted in the fire that killed four and injured eight.

(Richard Perry/The New York Times)

en local fire departments rushed to the scene but that by the time they ar-

the upper floor to get to trapped guests but the flames were too intense.

noticed her in the window," Fox said. She was on the second floor and

Obama reassures Internet CEOs

JOSH LEDERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama sought Friday to assure leading Internet and tech executives that his administration is committed to protecting people's privacy, a week before a self-imposed deadline for a review of National Security Agency programs.

CEOs from Facebook, Google, Netflix and others spent more than two hours with Obama in the president's White House office discussing their concerns about NSA spying programs, which have drawn outrage from tech companies whose data have been scooped up by the government. Joining Obama and the CEOs were Obama's commerce secretary, homeland security adviser, and counselor John Podesta, whom Obama has tasked with leading a review of privacy

and "big data."

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues departed the White House without speaking to reporters. The White House said Obama gave the CEOs an update on the big data review, which is examining the complex and evolving relationship between the government, its citizens and their private information. "The president reiterated his administration's commitment to taking steps that can give people greater confidence that their rights are being protected while preserving important tools that keep us safe," the White House said in a statement.

Separate from the big data review, Obama in January directed the government to develop and present alternatives for who should store the phone records from hundreds of millions of Americans that the NSA holds. □

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Hawaii law lets police have sex with prostitutes

SAM EIFLING
Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Honolulu police have urged lawmakers to preserve an exemption in Hawaii law that lets undercover officers have sex with prostitutes during investigations. But they won't say how often — or even if — they use the provision.

The notion has shocked advocates and law enforcement experts on the sex trade.

"I don't know of any state or federal law that allows any law enforcement officer undercover to ... do what this law is allowing," said Roger Young, a retired FBI agent who worked sex crimes out of Las Vegas for more than 20 years and has trained vice squads around the country. "Once we agree on the price and the sex act, that's all that you need. That breaks the law."

This year, state legislators moved to revamp Hawaii's decades-old law against prostitution. They toughened penalties against pimps and those who use prostitutes. They also pro-

posed scrapping the sex exemption for officers on duty.

But Honolulu police said they need the legal protection to catch lawbreakers in the act. Otherwise, they argued, prostitutes would insist on sex to identify undercover officers. The legislation was amended to restore the protection and the revised proposal passed the House and is now before the Senate.

But on Friday, lawmakers said they again planned

plan to change the bill — but this time to end the police exemption.

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony from citizens, advocates and lawyers who argued against the exemption.

No police testified Friday.

Committee Chairman Clayton Hee called the exemption nonsensical and said he would amend the bill to end it.

The Honolulu police vice officers who investigate prostitution haven't been accused of sexual wrongdoing in recent memory, spokeswoman Michelle Yu said in an email.

In recent testimony, Honolulu police assured lawmakers that departmental policies are in place to prevent officers from taking advantage of the sex ex-

actly how far the undercover officer can and cannot go," Maj. Jerry Inouye testified.

Advocates warn that the provision is an invitation for

monly complain of being coerced into giving sexual favors to police to keep from getting arrested. Having sex with a prostitute during an undercover op-



A pedestrian walks in front of a Honolulu Police Department station in Honolulu's tourist area of Waikiki. Honolulu police have urged lawmakers to preserve an exemption in Hawaii law that lets undercover officers have sex with prostitutes during investigations. But they won't say how often — or even if — they use the provision.

(AP Photo/Oskar Garcia)

emission. But they wouldn't detail those policies.

"If prostitution suspects, pimps and other people are privy to that information, they're going to know

misconduct. Melissa Farley, executive director of the San Francisco-based group Prostitution Research and Education, said prostitutes com-

eration "doesn't help your case, and at worst you further traumatize someone," said Derek Marsh, who trains California police on human trafficking. □

Ohio: Child killer's organ donation request denied

A. WELSH-HUGGINS

AP Legal Affairs Writer

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio said Friday it was denying a condemned child killer's request to donate organs to his family members, saying he didn't have enough time to undergo the surgery and recuperate for his summer execution. Organ donation surgery would have to have been completed by this coming Sunday to give the death row inmate, Ronald Phillips, enough time to recover before the July 2 execution, but Phillips had not shown he was anywhere close to that happening, according to letters from state prison officials to Phillips' attorney. The state "fully intends" to carry out Phillips' execution, Stephen Gray, the prison system's chief counsel, wrote to defense attorney Timothy Sweeney. Sweeney declined to com-

ment.

The state said Phillips is no different than any other inmate, meaning the state has an obligation to make sure he is healthy, despite the fact he will then be put to death. "Anyone who's undergone surgery, it's humane to have time to heal," said Ricky Seyfang, a spokeswoman for the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction warned Phillips about the Sunday deadline in a letter two months ago, according to documents released by the state.

"Only a little progress has been made by your client and his mother to move forward with this process," Gray wrote. He said Phillips' mother was to have attended a transplant educational session at Ohio State University's medical

center Jan. 21.

Even if she were placed on an approved waiting list, the process could take months, after which Phillips would need two to three months to recover, Gray said in a Jan. 24 letter.

Phillips, 40, was out of appeals in November when he made a last-minute request to donate the organs, including a kidney to his mother, who is on dialysis, and possibly his heart to his sister. The prison system rejected his request, but Gov. John Kasich delayed the execution until July 2 to give the state time to see whether it was possible to comply. "I realize this is a bit of uncharted territory for Ohio, but if another life can be saved by his willingness to donate his organs and tissues, then we should allow for that to happen," Kasich said in a statement at the time. □

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Families in crash that killed 2 girls sue General Motors

DETROIT (AP) — The families of three teenagers killed or injured in a 2006 car crash are suing General Motors, alleging that the company was negligent in designing its small cars and committed fraud by not disclosing facts about the defects. Natasha Weigel, who was 18, and Amy Rademaker,

the lawsuit was filed Friday in Hennepin County, Minnesota, where the car was purchased.

The crash was among the first blamed on the faulty ignition switches. Last month GM recalled 1.6 million Cobalts and other small cars worldwide to replace the switches. The compa-

nies. Hilliard, whose firm is in Corpus Christi, Texas, said an investigation showed the Cobalt's air bags failed to activate and the ignition switch was in the accessory position. That indicates the power steering and brakes and air bags did not work properly, he said.



Rows of cars sit on the lot at the Lordstown, Ohio. The families of three teenagers killed or injured in a 2006 Wisconsin car crash are suing General Motors, alleging that the company was negligent in designing its small cars and committed fraud by not disclosing facts about the defects. (AP Photo/Mark Stahl)

who was 15, both of Wisconsin, died after the crash involving a 2005 Chevrolet Cobalt compact car with a faulty ignition switch. The car's driver, Megan Phillips, suffered permanent brain damage, according to a statement from the families' law firm.

GM failed to warn the teens of a dangerous defect and misrepresented the car's safety, said lawyer Robert Hilliard in a statement. The firm said

ny has admitted knowing about the problem for at least 11 years before taking the action.

The switches can slip out of the run position, shutting down the engine while the cars are being driven. That can cut off power-assisted steering and brakes and cause drivers to lose control. It also disables the air bags if there's a crash. GM says at least a dozen people have been killed in crashes linked to the

"GM hid this dangerous, life-threatening defect from my clients and all other Cobalt drivers for over a decade just to avoid the cost of a recall," Hilliard, of the firm Hilliard Munoz Gonzales, said in the statement.

The lawsuit seeks more than \$50,000 each for Phillips and the survivors of Weigel and Rademaker, the statement said.

GM would not comment directly on the lawsuit but

California in talks over closed-nuke costs

MICHAEL R. BLOOD
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Talks are under way to resolve a costly question at the shuttered San Onofre nuclear power plant in California — who pays a bill that could top \$3 billion, officials disclosed Friday.

Edison International — the parent company of plant operator Southern California Edison — said in a government filing that a meeting would be held next week to discuss details of a possible deal.

SCE and minority owner

San Diego Gas & Electric Co. have been negotiating with consumer advocates over how to divide a long list of costs from repairs and inspections at the now-closed reactors to replacement power once the plant shut down.

At issue has been who should take the hit — company shareholders or ratepayers.

"Our goal is to secure the maximum amount of refunds for customers as soon as possible, and to ensure that utility shareholders bear a significant

share of responsibility for the premature shutdown of San Onofre," said Matthew Freedman, lead attorney for the Utility Reform Network, a consumer advocacy group involved in the talks.

"It's been far too long that customers have been paying for mistakes made at that plant," Freedman said. The twin-domed plant between San Diego and Los Angeles was closed permanently by Edison last year after a long and costly fight over whether it was safe to restart. □

said it's focused on "ensuring the safety and peace of mind of our customers involved in the recall."

Under the terms of its bankruptcy, GM is not liable for legal claims from crashes that occurred before it left bankruptcy protection in July of 2009. Such claims would go to a trust formed

to settle claims against the old company. Lawyers, though, are researching whether they can prove that GM knew about the ignition switch problem during the bankruptcy but didn't disclose it to the court. In that case, the new GM might be liable for older claims. □

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Wendy's rolling out mobile payment in US

CANDICE CHOI

AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wendy's is rolling out a program that lets customers pay using their smartphones, following a similar plan unveiled by Burger King this week. The Wendy's Co., based in Dublin, Ohio, has been testing the mobile payment option over the past year and said the majority of its roughly 5,800 U.S. locations are now ready to accept the payments.

The move reflects a push by fast-food chains to court younger customers by tapping into the attachment they have to their phones. "If they want to come in and give us business, we want to allow them to pay the way they want to pay," Craig Bahner, chief marketing officer for Wendy's, said in a phone interview. Burger King Worldwide Inc. also said this week it would introduce a mobile payment program at its U.S. restaurants in April.

McDonald's Corp., meanwhile, has acknowledged the importance of mobile payments but is still in a testing phase after hiring its first chief digital officer this past October.

The company, based in Oak Brook, Illinois, is known in the industry for its meticulous planning of any changes. But at a recent investor conference, Chief Financial Officer Pete Bensen noted it would have to do things that were "a little bit unnatural for McDonald's" to stay on top of digital trends.

"We're going to have to put some things out there

that we know are not 100 percent perfect. But if you wait in this space until everything is 100 percent figured out, then you're going to miss the whole opportunity," he said.

McDonald's isn't alone in still figuring out exactly

gram and says 14 percent of all purchases now come from mobile payments. Executives at the coffee chain say customers who sign up for the app tend to visit more often.

"You look at the numbers that Starbucks puts out,

Rhoten said Wendy's saw promising trends in tests, including increased visits.

The rollout comes as Wendy's works to revamp its image to be more in line with chains like Panera Bread, which charge a little more than traditional fast-food



A Wendy's single with cheese large combo meal at a Wendy's restaurant in Mt. Lebanon, Pa. Wendy's is rolling out a program that lets customers pay using their smartphones, following a similar plan unveiled by Burger King this week.

(AP Photo/Gene J. Puskar)

how it wants to approach mobile payments and loyalty programs. Chipotle is still experimenting with the options as well.

In the meantime, Starbucks Corp. is pushing to get more customers to sign up for its app and loyalty pro-

and it's pretty amazing," said Brandon Rhoten, vice president of digital at Wendy's.

It's not clear whether the impact Starbucks sees in mobile would translate to fast-food chains, since coffee is more of a daily fix. But

chains like McDonald's and Burger King. That push has included remodeling of its restaurants to have a more inviting feel, as well as the addition of menu items such as the Pretzel Bacon Burger that command higher prices. □

Starbucks to offer beer, wine in more cafes

NEW YORK (AP) — Starbucks plans to turn more of its cafes into a destination for beer and wine in the evenings.

The coffee company says it is looking to expand alcohol sales to "thousands of select stores" over the next several years, although it didn't provide details on an exact timeline.

The chain first offered beer and wine after 4 p.m. at one of its Seattle cafes in

2010. The drinks are now in about 26 cafes, with plans to reach 40 by the end of the year. The cafes with alcohol also serve a variety of small dishes, such as bacon-wrapped dates and flatbreads.

It's part of Starbucks' push to boost sales after the morning rush hour. It's a common concept in the restaurant industry — figuring out ways to maximize sales throughout the day.

As for Starbucks Corp., the chain recently introduced new sandwiches and sal- ads to boost sales in the afternoon. It's also branching out into other areas to as it faces more competition in the coffee market. The company recently purchased a chain of tea shops called Teavana. CEO Howard Schultz has said he wants to make tea as popular in the U.S. as he's helped make coffee. There are about 11,000 Starbucks stores in the U.S. □

Red Lobster in hot water over shrimp prices

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) —

A spike in shrimp costs is causing yet more trouble for Red Lobster.

The seafood chain's parent company Darden Restaurants on Friday reported a lower quarterly profit in line with its previously announced estimates. Sales at its struggling Olive Garden and Red Lobster chains dropped by 5.4 percent and 8.8 percent respectively, as reported on March 3.

The Orlando-based company has been fighting to win back customers at its flagship chains and has said it will spin off or sell Red Lobster to focus its attention on fixing Olive Garden with a revamped menu and marketing. Both chains have been losing customers as more affordable alternatives such as Chipotle have gained in popularity.

But in recent months, another factor weighing on Red Lobster was higher shrimp costs. Executives said that costs in the quarter rose about 30 percent because of "production issues in Asia." They said don't expect relief until the early part of its fiscal 2015 year.

On an annual basis, Chief Financial Officer Brad Richmond said the company is facing a \$30 million increase in shrimp costs.

For the quarter ended Feb. 23, Darden posted a profit of \$109.7 million, or 82 cents per share, matching its guidance. That was down almost 23 percent from year-ago earnings of \$134.4 million, or \$1.02 per share.

Analysts expected earnings of 85 cents per share. Revenue of \$2.23 billion was down 1 percent, below the \$2.26 billion analysts expected.

Darden also said it still expects its fiscal 2014 earnings to be down between 15 percent and 20 percent from last year. Revenue at stores open at least a year, a key sales metric, is expected to fall 5.5 percent. □



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Crimea Goes East, Ukraine Goes West in 2 New Deals

RAF CASERT

V. ISACHENKOV

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Two almost simultaneous signatures Friday on opposite sides of Europe deepened the divide between East and West, as Russia formally annexed Crimea and the European Union pulled Ukraine closer into its orbit. In this "new post-Cold War order," as the Ukrainian prime minister called it, besieged Ukrainian troops on the Crimean Peninsula faced a critical choice: leave, join the Russian military or demobilize. Ukraine was working on evacuating its outnumbered troops in Crimea, but some said they were still awaiting orders. With fears running high of clashes between the two sides or a grab by Moscow for more of Ukraine, the chief of the U.N. came to the capital city Kiev and urged calm all around.

All eyes were on Russian President Vladimir Putin, as they have been ever since pro-Western protests drove out Ukraine's president a month ago, angering Russia and plunging Europe into its worst crisis in a generation.

Putin sounded a conciliatory note Friday, almost joking about U.S. and EU sanctions squeezing his inner circle and saying he saw no reason to retaliate. But his government later warned of further action. Russia's troubled economic outlook may drive its decisions as much as any outside military threat. Stocks sank further, and a possible downgrade of Russia's credit rating loomed. Visa and MasterCard stopped serving two Russian banks, and Russia conceded it may scrap plans to tap

international markets for money this year.

Despite those clouds, Putin painted Friday's events in victorious colors, and fireworks burst over Moscow and Crimea on his orders, in a spectacle reminiscent of the celebrations held when Soviet troops drove

in November and chose a bailout from Russia instead. That ignited months of protests that eventually drove him from power.

Ukraine's new prime minister, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, a leader of the protest movement, eagerly pushed for the EU agreement.

customs union instead.

In exchange for the EU pact, Ukraine's government is promising economic reforms.

"In the long term, the biggest challenge will be to build a strong Ukrainian economy, rooted in strong institutions that respect the

seen a possible slight de-escalation in tensions, Russia accepted a plan to send an international fact-finding team of at least 100 members into Ukraine to assess security in the country. For more than a week, Russia had stonewalled the push by other members of



Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, second right, and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, right, hand each other their books during a signing ceremony at an EU summit in Brussels on Friday, March 21, 2014. Ukraine's prime minister has pulled his nation closer into Europe's orbit, signing a political association agreement with the EU at a summit of the bloc's leaders.

(AP Photo/Olivier Hoslet, Pool)

the Nazis from occupied cities in World War II.

At the Kremlin, Putin signed parliamentary legislation incorporating Crimea into Russia, hailing it as a "remarkable event."

At nearly the same time in a ceremony in Brussels, EU leaders sought to pull cash-strapped Ukraine westward by signing a political association agreement with the new Ukrainian prime minister.

The highly symbolic piece of paper is part of the same EU deal that touched off Ukraine's political crisis when then-President Viktor Yanukovych rejected it

"This deal meets the aspirations of millions of Ukrainians that want to be a part of the European Union," Yatsenyuk said in Brussels. The agreement includes security and defense cooperation, he said, though it is far from full EU membership and doesn't include an important free-trade element yet. But the EU decided to grant Ukraine financial advantages such as reduced tariffs to boost its ailing economy until the full deal can be signed. Those trade advantages are a blow to Russia, which had hoped to pull Ukraine into a Moscow-focused

rule of law," British Prime Minister David Cameron said at the EU summit.

The deal comes at a critical moment financially: Amid its political crisis, Ukraine is teetering on the verge of bankruptcy, struggling to pay off billions of dollars in debts in the coming months. The U.S. and the EU have pledged to quickly offer a bailout.

Russia's foreign minister dismissed the EU pact, saying the current Ukrainian leadership lacks popular support and should have held elections before making such a decision.

Meanwhile, in what was

the 57-nation Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to send in monitors. OSCE hopes the mission will prevent an escalation of tensions in Ukraine's east and south—regions with large Russian-speaking populations.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, visiting Ukraine's capital, urged talks between Kiev and Moscow.

"At times like this, it is vital that all parties refrain from any provocative actions that could exacerbate an already very tense and very volatile situation," he said. □

Israel announces discovery of tunnel stretching from Gaza

JODI RUDOREN

© 2014 New York Times

JERUSALEM - The Israeli military announced Friday that it had uncovered a sophisticated tunnel that stretched hundreds of yards into its territory from the Gaza Strip and could have been used to attack or kidnap Israelis.

Lt. Col. Peter Lerner, a military spokesman, told reporters that fresh footprints and tools found inside the tunnel from southern Gaza suggested it had been worked on even "in the last few days," and that its design, with many offshoots, made it "the most advanced tunnel that we've exposed." Though the tunnel did not reach an Israeli town or village, Lerner said, "it wasn't that far - a quick sprint and you could attack a community."

Hamas, the militant Palestinian faction that controls the Gaza Strip, played

down the significance of the tunnel - and of Israel's intelligence feat in finding it. A spokesman for its military wing said the tunnel had been exposed by bad weather, which also caused parts of it to collapse.

"This tunnel was unsuitable for use," said the spokesman, who was identified only as Abu Obaida. "This is not a new tunnel, and it was uncovered due to the rainstorm last week. The discovery was not an intelligence achievement, as the enemy tries to promote."

The Israel Defense Forces found three similar tunnels under the Gaza border fence last year, but Lerner described the most recently discovered one as "the most substantial." In 2006, Palestinian militants used a tunnel to enter Israel, kill two soldiers and kidnap a third, Gilad Shalit, who was held for five years.



In a handout photo dated March 21, 2014 by Israeli military sources, tunnel entrances in the Gaza Strip allegedly leading under the Israeli border. An Israeli military spokesman said that fresh footprints and tools found inside indicate it was recently extended, and speculated that it could have been used to attack a settlement. (Israeli Defense Forces via The New York Times)

Though 2013 was the quietest year in a decade between Israel and Gaza,

tensions have been escalating in recent months. Last week, Islamic Jihad

and smaller militant Palestinian groups fired about 100 rockets into southern Israel over three days, prompting several rounds of Israeli airstrikes.

The Islamic Jihad assault came in retaliation for Israel's killing of three of its members who had shot a mortar at Israeli soldiers working on the Gaza side of the fence. This month, Israel seized a commercial ship with what it described as an Iranian shipment of advanced weapons headed to Gaza.

Friday afternoon, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded two Palestinian men who the military said were trying to climb the fence separating northern Gaza from Israel. Israeli troops have killed two Palestinians and injured more than 60 so far this year during Friday protests against Israel's restrictions on farming in the so-called buffer zone inside the fence.

When the last tunnel was discovered, in October, Israel barred construction materials from passing through its Kerem Shalom crossing for anything other than selected international aid projects. A spokesman for the Israeli agency responsible for the crossing did not return messages Friday. □

Journalist among 9 killed in Afghan attack

M. ROSENBERG

AZAM AHMED

© 2014 New York Times

KABUL, Afghanistan - Handguns tucked into their socks, four gunmen slipped

inside the luxurious Serena Hotel in Kabul on Thursday night and launched an attack that killed at least nine people, including four foreigners. Among the dead

were an Afghan journalist and four members of his family who were celebrating the Persian New Year and a former Paraguayan diplomat who had come

to Afghanistan to observe next month's elections.

The Taliban quickly claimed responsibility for the attack, reinforcing fears that the election to replace President Hamid Karzai will be accompanied by widening bloodshed. A series of attacks have made it apparent that Afghan and foreign civilians are likely to bear the brunt of the violence, which in the past two weeks has ranged from a suicide bombing at a bazaar in northern Afghanistan to an assassination of a Swedish journalist on a crowded Kabul street. The fallout from the attack was swift, with the National Democratic Institute deciding Friday to pull its staff from Afghanistan. Its staff members were staying at the Serena. Other observer missions and international organizations were weighing whether they could stay on, and it appeared certain that security concerns would further diminish the already limited international role in the election. The vote is scheduled for April 5. □



A security guard armed with an assault rifle patrols the halls of the Serena Hotel, the morning after an attack at the luxury hotel in Kabul, Afghanistan, March 21, 2014. Four gunmen slipped inside the hotel Thursday night and launched the attack that killed at least nine people, including four foreigners. The Taliban quickly claimed responsibility after, reinforcing fears that an upcoming election to replace President Hamid Karzai will be accompanied by widening bloodshed. (Bryan Denton/The New York Times)

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Killing of 7 marks rise of Mexico drug corridor



Patricio Canavati, of TPS Armoring stands between two vehicles that his company armored, one with over 1,800 bullet holes, and a newly armored SUV, at the 8th annual Border Security Expo in Phoenix. The bullet riddled SUV saved the life of secretary of Public Security of the state of Michoacan, Mexico, Minerva Bau-tista Gomez in 2010.

(AP Photo/Matt York)

FELIPE LARIOS
MARK STEVENSON

Associated Press

HERMOSILLO, Mexico (AP)

The massacre of seven men near the Mexico-Arizona border came in a previously quiet area increasingly used as a drug-trafficking corridor, and a U.S. expert said Friday the attack in the newly valuable territory could be the work of rivals of the once-dominant Sinaloa cartel trying to exploit the arrest of the gang's leader.

Analysts have expected rival cartels to try to move in on Sinaloa territory in response to the Feb. 22 capture of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman and the apparent death in December of one of his top lieutenants in a shootout with federal police.

The ambush-style attack this week happened in a rural area near Sonoyta, Mexico, close to the U.S. border crossing at Lukeville, Arizona. The crossing is frequently used by U.S.

travelers to reach the Gulf of California beach town of Puerto Penasco.

The seven men apparently were attacked by rival drug traffickers as they delivered drugs. Their bodies were found inside or near a pickup truck Wednesday night. Authorities say an eighth man was found wounded on a nearby hill and he told state police the victims had just dropped off marijuana Tuesday when gunmen opened fire with automatic rifles on their pickup truck.

All of the men are believed to have been from the state of Sinaloa, the home of Guzman's cartel.

Anthony Coulson, retired head of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's office in Tucson, Arizona, said the attack could be the start of a turf war between another gang and the Sinaloa cartel.

With Guzman in custody and top lieutenant Gonzalo Inzunza possibly dead, "you have a territory in dis-

pute ... a key important territory," he said.

"Who controls that corner controls how trafficking goes into California, which was a Chapo Guzman stronghold that he took over from the Arellano Felix organization," Coulson said. "That's a key strategic point, because of such a huge uptick of trafficking into Southern California."

There is little doubt that despite the area's relatively calm reputation, it had become a major trafficking corridor for Sinaloa.

In December, Puerto Penasco was the scene of an

hours-long gunbattle between cartel gunmen and federal police who were trying to catch Inzunza. Government Blackhawk helicopters fired on at least 10 vehicles trying to flee a luxury beach condo complex during the firefight. No tourists or residents were injured, but five gunmen were killed.

Inzunza's body was not found at the scene, but federal officials said they believed he had been shot and carried by fleeing gunmen, as cartel gunmen sometimes do with fallen

gang members or leaders. Local officials denied Inzunza operated out of the resort, but federal police said later that Inzunza had "set up his center of operations in Puerto Penasco" to run drug-trafficking networks. The resort is in Sonora state, which has been relatively free of the drug violence that has plagued other northern border states. The Sinaloa cartel may have chosen the area as a base because other border areas are under the control of rival cartels or feeling the effects of government crackdowns. □

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Mt. Gox: 200,000 bitcoins found; worth about \$114M

RACHEL ABRAMS

© 2014 New York Times

Mt. Gox, the Tokyo-based bitcoin exchange that collapsed and filed for bankruptcy last month, said it had found 200,000 bitcoins that were held in an "old-format" wallet, or digital storage file.

Mt. Gox's former chief executive, Mark Karpeles, issued a statement in Japanese and English on the company's website saying that after it filed for bankruptcy, it began researching these wallets that were used before June 2011. That is when the company discovered the 200,000 bitcoins, which represent about 24 percent of the coins that went missing

when the site failed.

Last month, Mt. Gox said it had lost 750,000 of its customers' bitcoin holdings and more than 100,000 of its own coins, or more than \$450 million worth. Based on today's rates, the found coins are worth about \$114 million.

Since then, plaintiffs have filed a class-action lawsuit, seeking a temporary injunction to keep Karpeles or his company from moving any money outside of the United States. They also want a full accounting of any assets Mt. Gox has left. Mt. Gox said it reported the discovery of the coins to the bankruptcy court on March 10, and that it moved them to an of-

fline site from March 14 to March 15.

The latest announcement is likely to add to the questions about Mt. Gox's collapse. Even the company said it was still uncertain about what led up to its failure.

"Please note that the reasons for their disappearance and the exact number of bitcoins which disappeared is still under investigation," the company concluded in its statement dated Thursday.

Bitcoins can be stored online or offline, otherwise known as "hot" and "cold" wallets. A "cold" wallet can be nothing more than writing down a digital key to access one's bitcoin on

a scrap of paper for later use, or storing data on a thumb drive.

Thieves can steal bitcoin by accessing it through a computer network, or by taking the physical storage material.

Many Bitcoin supporters have said that the collapse of Mt. Gox is part of the shake-out of the early, less sophisticated Bitcoin companies that have lost ground to newer, more well-oiled businesses.

"I think that it's yet another illustration of how incompetently managed that hobbyist operation was," said Gil Luria, a managing director at Wedbush Securities who has written about Bitcoin. □

Russian stocks down as banks feel sanctions

N. VASILYeva

Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia conceded Friday that it may scrap plans to tap international markets for money this year as it counts the cost of the sanctions imposed in the wake of the annexation of Crimea.

Fears over Russia's economic outlook have ratcheted up this week as the country absorbed Crimea following Sunday's hastily called referendum which overwhelmingly supported the move. The West considers the vote illegitimate and has slapped on sanctions in response.

The sanctions are already being felt on the streets of Russia as Visa and MasterCard stopped serving two Russian banks, a day after the U.S. ordered sanctions against two dozen people from President Vladimir Putin's entourage.

Russian shares continued to falter Friday, and the benchmark MICEX index was down 2 percent in late afternoon trading. The Russian stock market has lost than more 10 percent this month amid growing tensions between Russia and the West. In comments carried by Russian news agencies, Russia's Finance Minister Anton Siluanov became the first Russian official to admit to an economic fallout from the sanctions. Siluanov said the country may scrap plans to raise \$7 billion worth of bonds this year if oil and gas revenues remain steady. Moscow "may decide to give up external borrowing," he said. The economic sanctions ordered on Thursday by President Barack Obama targeted 20 people, including Putin's chief of staff and four influential businessmen who are believed to be his lifelong friends, and also a major Russian bank that provides them support.

Two Russian banks, including Bank Rossiya, the Russian lender which was put on the Treasury's sanctions list, said Visa and MasterCard have stopped providing services to them. □

EU's economic health is better, but not good

FLOYD NORRIS

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The eurozone's back-to-back recessions may be over. Most economies are growing, and employment totals have begun to inch upward. New-auto sales, which plunged in 2011 and 2012 as the second recession gathered strength, have risen in Europe in each of the last six months. But saying things are getting better is not the same as saying they are good. In reporting that new-car registrations across the European Union were up 8 percent in February from the same month in 2013, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association noted this week that "in absolute figures, the total of 861,058 units registered marked the second-lowest result to date for a month of February" since figures began to be compiled for an expanded European Union in 2003.

The overall double-dip was visible in many European countries, though not Germany, whose results have been considerably better than those of most other countries.

The postrecession recovery has been steady, if slow, in the United States. But as the eurozone crisis erupted, with Greece, Ireland and Portugal needing

European bailouts, the second recession began. That can be seen most clearly in the GDP figures for the eurozone countries other than Germany. The second downturn began in late 2011 and appears to have hit bottom in the first quarter of 2013. Now, economies have begun to grow again in Spain, Por-

France was also alone among major European countries in reporting fewer new-car registrations in February than in the same month of 2013.

Elsewhere, employment is generally going up, albeit from low levels, and the Greek fourth-quarter increase, of 6,900 employees, or 0.2 percent, was

ber of people working in most eurozone countries is well below the level of late 2007. Many of those countries have suffered from a loss of competitiveness relative to Germany, a loss that cannot be offset by currency depreciation since all use the same currency. Germany, where employment is almost 5 percent higher than it was in 2007, has been helped by the fact that the euro is probably weaker than a stand-alone German currency would be.

In Britain, a non-euro country, the number of jobs is nearly 3 percent higher than it was in 2007. In the United States, the decline has been almost entirely erased.

New-car sales can provide a revealing indicator of economic health. Car purchases can be deferred when the economy is weak, and then surge when conditions improve. But if the weakness persists, customers can avoid new-car purchases altogether, buying used vehicles if a purchase is necessary.

Nowhere is that clearer than in Greece. Even with a slight pickup in late 2013 and in the first two months of this year, Greek car sales for the last 12 months are nearly 79 percent below the level of 2007. □



European Commissioner for Economic and Monetary Affairs Olli Rehn, right, talks with Irish Finance Minister Michael Noonan, left, and President of the European Central Bank Mario Draghi, during the eurogroup ministerial meeting at the European Council building in Brussels.

(AP Photo/Yves Logge)

tugal and Ireland. But in Greece, the best that can be said is that its economy is going down at a slower pace than it did before. In Italy, the figures continue to decline, and while the French economy is growing, the number of people with jobs is not increasing.

hardly proof of a turnaround. The European Union's statistical agency, Eurostat, released the fourth-quarter figures last week after making sure the methodology was constant in all countries.

Even with the fourth-quarter improvement, the num-

LOCAL Aruba TODAY

Loyal Visitors honored at the Marriott Surf Club!

PALM BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a group of loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Marriott Surf Club as Distinguished Visitors. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years.

The honorees were Dave and Sherrill Hamman of Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Mark and Sheila Davidson from Ankeny, Florida. The honorees are loyal members of the Marriott Surf Club and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the weather, the beaches, and restaurants, and because being on Aruba and staying at the Surf Club is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with the Hamman family, Jenny Boekhoudt and Joop Bangma, GM from the Marriott Surf Club. □



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EAGLE BEACH - Aruba's culture was on display for the day when La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino hosted a festive lunch in honor of Aruba's Flag & Anthem Day. The function at the Chit Chat Cafe included Aruban food, keshi yena, pan bati, funchi and banana hasa, Aruban music with the talented Robby Thiel, and Aruban décor including indigenous plants and fruits with Maureen Laaf-Ras, which contributed to the unforgettable ambiance at the cafeteria. The festive luncheon

rounded up the delightful national experience at Aruba's most active resort, La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino, sharing Aruba's cultural bounty with guests and associates. □



The Best Picanha Served at Amazonia Churrascaria

PALM BEACH - The Picanha is Brazil's most popular cut of beef. While little known in the US, it is the preferred cut at Amazonia Churrascaria, prepared in accordance to Gaucho tradition, where the cow's rump cap is rolled into a juicy, most-prized delicacy, grilled to perfection then sliced tableside exposing the delicious sirloin heart. Camilo Silva, visiting from Chile, lived in Brazil many years and just loves Picanha. While dining at Amazonia Churrascaria he was treated to a generous helping of Picanha and thought it was excellent!

The restaurant is gearing up to Holy Communion season on the island and is expecting to host many big and small parties serving a great selection of food, including Picanha, to family members and friends celebrating the start of a religious life for many of the island's youngsters. □



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Scott builds a 7-shot lead at Bay Hill



Adam Scott plans his next putt on the 15th hole during the second round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill Friday March 21, 2014, in Orlando, Fla.

Copyright 2014 The Associated Press.

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) —

Adam Scott keeps putting his name in the Bay Hill record book, each round moving him closer to another handshake with The

King.

One day after Scott opened with a record-tying 62 in the Arnold Palmer Invitational, he hit his stride around the turn Friday with

five birdies in an eight-hole stretch to leave everyone else far behind. Even with a three-putt bogey on his final hole, Scott still had a 4-under 68 for a seven-shot

lead. He was at 14-under 130, matching the 36-hole record at Bay Hill first set by Tom Watson and Andy Bean in 1981. And his seven-shot margin at the half-

way point shattered the previous record held by Tiger Woods in 2002 and Paul Azinger in 1988.

Continued on Page 22



In a Dec. 22, 2013 file photo, Philadelphia Eagles' Michael Vick warms up before the first half of an NFL football game between the Philadelphia Eagles and the Chicago Bears, in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

Jets sign Vick and release Sanchez

By DENNIS WASZAK Jr.

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- Michael Vick is switching green jerseys - and maybe trading his clipboard for a starting job.

The New York Jets signed the former Philadelphia Eagles quarterback to a one-year deal on Friday, and

released Mark Sanchez, the one-time face of the franchise. Vick was a free agent after spending the last five seasons with the Eagles. He will be reunited with Jets offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg, who helped the quarterback have the best season of his career in Philadelphia

in 2010. Vick was plagued by injuries the last three years and lost the starting job last year to Nick Foles. He was considered the top quarterback available in this offseason's free agent class, although he didn't garner much attention.

Continued on Page 21

Federer edges Karlovic with strong serve

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP)

— Roger Federer made a victorious return Friday to the Sony Open after skipping last year's tournament, and then was treated to a tribute on the stadium video screen.

"It looks like a farewell video," Federer told the crowd with a giggle. "I miss one year, and you make me feel guilty."

Federer's back, as he showed by beating big-serving Ivo Karlovic 6-4, 7-6 (4). Federer lost just three points on his serve to his 6-foot-11 opponent, and in a match with few rallies, he committed only three unforced errors.

Three-time champion Novak Djokovic followed Federer onto the stadium court and into the third round, beating Jeremy Chardy 6-4, 6-3.

At 32, Federer has looked rejuvenated recently, and was the runner-up to Djokovic last week at Indian Wells. The 17-time Grand Slam champion says his new racket gives him more power, and he's moving as he did in the old days.

After falling out of the top five last year for the first time since 2002, Federer returned to No. 5 this week. He led from the start against Karlovic, making the surprising choice to receive after winning the toss and earning the lone break of the match in the opening game.

"I just felt like, you know, let him go first and see how it goes," Federer said. "It worked well today because I got the early break right away. That relaxed me for the rest of the first set clearly, but still he hung around."

While Federer had trouble

with serves from Karlovic that peaked at 138 mph, the Croat had no chance when returning. Federer won 49 of his 52 service points.

Federer improved to 11-1 in their head-to-head — or, in this case, head-to-shoulder. He said playing Karlovic presents unique challenges that he enjoys.

"Physically it's super easy. There are no long rallies," Federer said. "It's just more like a penalty shootout in soccer."

The longest point was the last one, and when Karlovic pushed a backhand into the net on the 10th stroke, Federer hopped happily in celebration and threw a fist.

The show of exuberance might be a hint he's keen to do well in a tournament he hasn't won since 2006.

"I'm very relieved and happy to be through," he said.



Roger Federer, of Switzerland, reaches for a return against Ivo Karlovic, of Croatia, during a match at the Sony Open tennis tournament, Friday, March 21, 2014, in Key Biscayne, Fla.

Associated Press

It was the first match at Key Biscayne in two years for Federer, who took a spring break in 2013.

On the women's side, No. 2-seeded Li Na reached the third round when Alisa Kleybanova withdrew because of a viral illness. Kleybanova, who won in dou-

bles Thursday, is a former top 20-player mounting a career comeback from Hodgkin's lymphoma.

No. 6 Simona Halep withdrew because of a right toe injury. American Varvara Lepchenko outlasted No. 7 Jelena Jankovic 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 (2). □



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CASINO AND SHOPS

Durant scores 35 as Thunder beat Cavaliers



Oklahoma City Thunder's Kevin Durant (35) is fouled by Cleveland Cavaliers' Alonzo Gee (33) during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game Thursday, March 20, 2014, in Cleveland. Oklahoma City defeated Cleveland 102-95.

Associated Press

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The Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — Kevin Durant scored 35 points and Serge Ibaka had 16 as the Oklahoma City Thunder held off a furious Cleveland comeback for a 102-95 win over the injury-riddled Cavaliers on Thursday.

Durant missed five of his first six shots, but the NBA's top scorer finally found his touch. He has scored 25 or more in 33 straight games — the NBA's second-longest streak since Michael Jordan did it 40 consecutive times (1986-87).

With their 50th win, the Thunder, who let a 24-point lead dwindle to five in the fourth, moved within 1½ games of San Antonio for the best record in the Western Conference.

Dion Waiters scored 30 for the Cavs, who were without injured star guard Kyrie Irving.

ROCKETS 129, TIMBERWOLVES 106

HOUSTON (AP) — James Harden had 28 points with eight assists as Houston rolled to victory over Minnesota.

The Rockets trailed by as many as 10 before using a big run in the second quarter to take the lead.

Turkish center Omer Asik started in his place of injured Dwight Howard, who has an strained left ankle, and scored 12 points as the Rockets won for the seventh time in 10 games. Kevin Love scored 29 points and Senegalese rookie Gorgui Dieng had

22 points and 21 rebounds, both career-highs.

TRAIL BLAZERS 116, WIZARDS 103

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP) — Wesley Matthews had 28 points, including four 3-pointers, as Portland beat Washington.

Damian Lillard added 23 points and 10 assists for the Blazers, who are still without injured All-Star LaMarcus Aldridge.

Portland remained in fifth place in the Western Conference with three victories in their last four games after a four-game losing streak. John Wall had 24 points and 14 assists for the Wizards, who have lost two straight to open four-game West Coast swing.

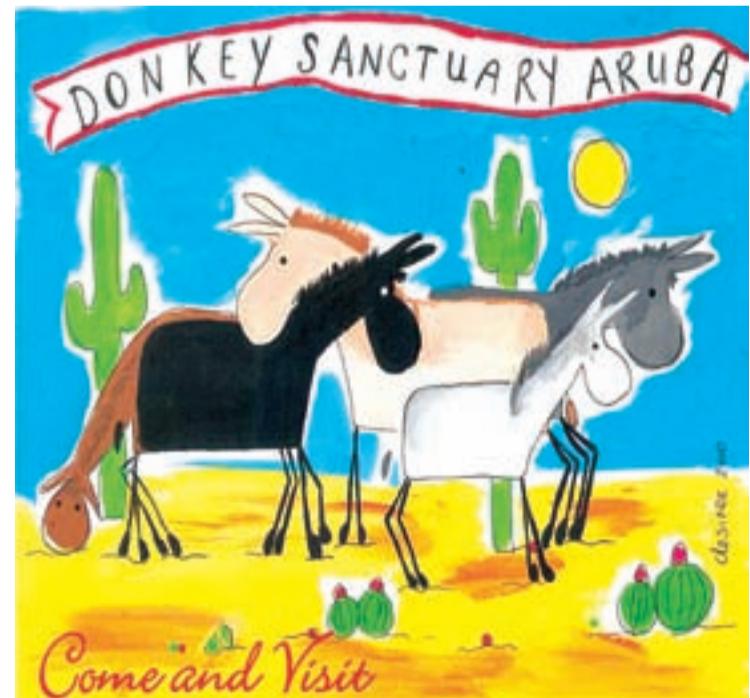
WARRIORS 115, BUCKS 110

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Stephen Curry had 31 points and 11 assists and Klay Thompson scored 29 as Golden State moved 18 games over .500 for the first time in 20 years.

David Lee added 22 points and 12 rebounds to help the Warriors win a tougher-than-expected game against the NBA's worst team.

Golden State remains in sixth place in the tight Western Conference standings, 1½ games behind Portland and 2½ games ahead of Memphis and Dallas with 12 games left.

Brandon Knight had 27 points and eight rebounds, and Ramon Sessions scored 18 for Milwaukee, which has lost six straight and nine of 10. □



Wings beat Pens with 1 second left in OT

DETROIT (AP) — Daniel Alfredsson scored his second goal of the game with 1 second left in overtime to give the Detroit Red Wings a 5-4 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Thursday.

NHL Capsules

Alfredsson's shot went off Pittsburgh goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury and appeared to be knocked into the net by Penguins defenseman Rob Scuderi, who scored into his own net earlier in the game. The goal stood after video review.

Detroit was up 2-0, trailed 3-2 and led 4-3 lead with 7:43 left. Craig Adams pulled Pittsburgh back into a tie two minutes later.

Gustav Nyquist, Tomas Tatar and Todd Bertuzzi also scored for Detroit.

Evgeni Malkin had two goals and Lee Stempniak added one for Pittsburgh. Fleury made 25 saves. Detroit's Jimmy Howard stopped 39 shots.

SHARKS 3, DUCKS 2

SAN JOSE, California (AP) — Brent Burns scored the tiebreaking goal with 3:59 to play to help San Jose beat Anaheim and take sole possession of first place in the Pacific Division for the first time in more than



Detroit Red Wings' Tomas Tatar (21), of Slovakia, tries to get to the puck controlled by Pittsburgh Penguins' Matt Niskanen (2) during the second period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, March 20, 2014 in Detroit. The Red Wings defeated the Penguins 5-4 in overtime.

Associated Press

three months.

Joe Thornton tied the game earlier in the third and got his second assist on the game-winner for the Sharks, who have won seven of eight to move two points ahead of Anaheim, although the Ducks have a game in hand. The Sharks, who trailed by 13 points af-

ter games on Jan. 15, have not been alone in first since Dec. 6.

Patrick Marleau also scored and Antti Niemi made 26 saves for San Jose.

Teemu Selanne and Mathieu Perreault scored for the Ducks, who have lost six of their last eight. Frederik Andersen made 25 saves.

KINGS 2, CAPITALS 1, SO

LOS ANGELES — Marian Gaborik got the deciding goal in the shootout and Los Angeles beat Washington to give Darryl Sutter his 500th regular-season victory as an NHL coach.

Jonathan Quick tied Rogie Vachon for the most career victories by a Kings goal-

tender and stopped Alex Ovechkin, who leads the league with 46 goals, on the Capitals' second shot in the tiebreaker. Ovechkin is 2 for 15 this season in the tiebreaker and 25 for 83 in his career.

Quick made 21 saves, losing his shutout bid with 7:36 remaining when Joel Ward extended his goal-scoring streak to a career-best four games with his 22nd of the season.

Anze Kopitar scored at 14:09 of the first period for Los Angeles.

FLYERS 4, STARS 2

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Wayne Simmonds scored two goals as Philadelphia beat Dallas for its fourth straight win.

Mark Streit and Michael Raffl also scored for Philadelphia, which maintained its hold on second place in the Metropolitan Division.

Jamie Benn scored twice for Dallas, which lost its fourth straight. The Stars began the day two points behind Phoenix for the final wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

Simmonds scored his second of the game with 7:39 left to put Philadelphia ahead 3-1. Just 30 seconds later, Benn scored his second of the contest. □

Jets

Continued from Page 18

Vick could present a real challenge to Jets starter Geno Smith, who played well down the stretch of his rookie season, but finished with 12 touchdowns and 21 interceptions.

"He's a great talent who's won many games, including playoff games, in this league," Mornhinweg said of Vick in comments posted on the team's website. "He has the respect of both his teammates and opponents. He's here in a role where he's going to compete and push Geno Smith to become the very best that he can be. Michael will be able to go in and play at a high level and a winning level if called upon."

Vick, who had a solid start in Chip Kelly's up-tempo

offense, injured a hamstring in Week 5 last season. He was replaced by Foles, who led the Eagles to the NFC East title and was selected the Pro Bowl MVP. Despite losing the starting gig, Vick was praised by Kelly and team officials for being a leader in the locker room and maintaining an outstanding relationship with Foles and helping him through his second NFL season.

The move by the Jets is reminiscent of the headline-making trade they made in 2008, when they acquired an unretired Brett Favre - but as their unquestioned starter. The former Green Bay Packers star led New York to an 8-3 start, but injured his right shoulder and slumped as the



In a Sept. 12, 2013 file photo, New York Jets quarterback Mark Sanchez, who normally throws right-handed, throws a pass with his left hand before an NFL football game between the New England Patriots and the Jets game, in Foxborough.

Associated Press

Jets lost four of their final five games and cost then-coach Eric Mangini his job. Favre retired again after the season, before playing two final seasons in Minnesota. Vick, a four-time Pro Bowl selection who will be 34 in June, was once considered the most dynamic

player in the NFL, particularly during his first six NFL seasons with the Atlanta Falcons.

His playing career was abruptly halted for two seasons in 2007, when he pleaded guilty to being part of a dog fighting ring. He served 21 months

in federal prison, and two more in home confinement. Since his release in 2009, Vick has worked with the Humane Society of the United States to stop organized animal fighting.

He signed with the Eagles in 2009 and revived his career the following season, being selected the AP's 2010 Comeback Player of the Year and starting in the Pro Bowl. With Mornhinweg as his coordinator, Vick threw for 3,018 yards that season with a career-high 21 TDs and just six interceptions. He also ran for a career-best nine scores.

The Sanchez move came as no surprise, but completes a stunning downfall for the quarterback who once drew comparisons to Joe Namath after helping lead the Jets to consecutive AFC title games in 2009 and 2010. □

Bay Hill

Continued from Page 18

Scott sounds like he's not the least bit satisfied.

"The challenge might be just to start again and try and play a great 36 holes," he said. "Start fresh and try to be the leader after the next 36."

That would merit a visit with Arnold Palmer, the tournament host known simply as "The King" in golf circles. Scott has spoken glowingly all week about his first invitation to Bay Hill when he was 20. Walking off the first green, Palmer was in a cart to greet him with a handshake, and Scott was amazed that Palmer knew his name.

Now he's the Masters champion, and the 33-year-old Australian is playing like one.

J.B. Holmes (69), Chesson Hadley (68) and Francesco Molinari of Italy (70) were tied for second at 7-under. Keegan Bradley had the low score of the blustery second round with a 67, putting him in a group at 138 that included Brandt Snedeker (71) and Jamie Donaldson of Wales (71). "I think I'm 10 behind and playing pretty well for two rounds," said Snedeker, who was off by two. "He's playing pretty phenomenal. He's going to be a tough guy to catch. A guy that hits it as good as he does and seems to have

a complete game like he has, and the way he's playing now, he's not going to come backward. Seems like an awfully special week if you can get close to him."

Scott played in the afternoon, when the course began to get firm under two days of full sunshine, and the pace on the greens began to quicken. No one ever got closer than his three-shot lead to start the round, though there were two pivotal moments.

He holed a 15-foot par putt

on the first hole to calm his nerves, and he hit a gorgeous shot out of the rough from 167 yards and made a 12-foot birdie on the ninth. He went to the back nine 1-under par for his round, and he took off from there.

Scott hit a 7-iron to 4 feet

on No. 11, got up-and-

down for birdie on the

par-3 12th, nearly holed

a tough chip from behind

the 14th green to save

par, and then made con-

secutive birdies with a 30-

foot putt on the 15th and

a 7-iron to pin-high for a

two-putt birdie on the par-

5 16th.

He only made it look easy.

There were three rounds in

the 80s, including by U.S.

Amateur champion Mat-

thew Fitzpatrick. U.S. Open

champion Justin Rose,



Brandt Snedeker covers his face after missing a birdie putt on the 16th hole during the second round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament at Bay Hill on Friday, March 21, 2014, in Orlando, Fla.

Associated Press

playing in the same group with Scott, had a 79 and missed the cut for the first time in a regular PGA Tour event since The Players Championship last May. "This course will really start to bare its teeth," Scott said.

"I've got to take in the attitude of starting over again and trying to play a really hard 36 holes. And hopefully, if I can I can keep striking the ball like I am, I'll give myself enough chances for birdie — and hopefully, more birdies than bogeys." At one point, caddie Steve Williams was some 275 yards down the left side

of the fairway on the par-5 16th. His boss was barely visible back on the tee, but Williams watched his swing and instantly said, "Perfect." And that it was, 325 yards right down the middle.

Scott missed only two fairways and has taken just 52 putts over the first 36 holes. He was in no mood to celebrate just yet. For one thing, he is still recovering from being sick. His energy was better Friday, though he could barely talk above a whisper during a brief interview with Golf Channel before his round. And

the Australian knows how a big lead can get away, even on the final day. He had a four-shot lead with four holes remaining in the 2012 British Open when it all went wrong — four straight bogeys — and Ernie Els walked off with the claret jug.

That's a distant memory for Scott, who takes that green jacket from Augusta National with him just about everywhere he goes.

"Seven shots over two days is not enough," Scott said. "I don't think you can ever be enough in the lead, to be honest." □

Couples fires 6-under 66, takes lead at Fallen Oak

DAVID BRANDT

AP Sports Writer

SAUCIER, Mississippi (AP) — Fred Couples shot a 6-under 66 to take a two-shot lead after the first round of the Champions Tour's Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic at Fallen Oak on Friday.

The 54-year-old Couples continued his run of good play after winning the Toshiba Classic in Newport Beach, California, last weekend. He has also had recent success at Fallen Oak, winning in 2012.

"I think it's a continuation of liking this course," Couples said. "That's why I'm here. I like Fallen Oak and hope to play it for a long time."

Defending champion Michael Allen shot a 68 to join Jeff Maggert, Kenny Perry, David Frost and Jay Haas in second place.

Couples started the day on No. 10 and made five birdies over his first eight holes. It was his 12th straight round in the 60s on the Champions Tour, dating to last season, which is one shy of the record set by Hale Irwin in 1999.

Couples has won 10 times on the Champions Tour since his first appearance in 2010.

Maggert, who is making his Champions Tour debut, hasn't won since 2006 on the PGA Tour at the St.

Jude's Classic.

"I think I hit all the fairways except for one — hit most of the greens," he said. "A couple 3-putts out there I was not too happy about but I just played steady golf, took advantage of the par 5s and put together a good round."

Allen edged Bernhard Langer by one stroke last year for one of his two wins on the Champions Tour last season. "Fred is playing awfully well," Allen said. "He's not making any mistakes. I have to eliminate some of my mistakes for sure, and hopefully I can keep making a few putts and get a little closer." □



Fred Couples watches his approach shot on the ninth hole during the first round of the Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic golf tournament at Fallen Oak in Saucier, Miss., on Friday, March 21, 2014.

Associated Press

Google enhances encryption technology for email

EILEEN SULLIVAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Google has enhanced the encryption technology for its flagship email service in ways that will make it harder for the National Security Agency to intercept messages moving among the company's worldwide data centers.

Among the most extraordinary disclosures in documents leaked by former NSA systems analyst Edward Snowden were reports that the NSA had secretly tapped into the main communications links that connect Yahoo and Google data centers around the world.

Google, whose executive chairman, Eric Schmidt, said in November that he was outraged over the practice, didn't mention the NSA in Thursday's announcement, except in a veiled reference to "last summer's revelations." The change affects more than 425 million users of Google's Gmail service.

Yahoo has promised similar steps for its email service by this spring. Google and other technology companies have been outspoken about the U.S. government's spy programs. The companies are worried more people will reduce their online activities if they believe almost everything they do is being monitored by the government. A de-



cline in Internet use could hurt the companies financially by giving them fewer opportunities to show online ads and sell other services. "Your email is important to you, and making sure it stays safe and always available is important to us," Nicolas Lidzborski, Gmail's security engineering lead, wrote in a blog post. Lidzborski said that all Gmail messages a consumer sends or receives are now encrypted. "This ensures that your messages are safe not only when they move between

you and Gmail's servers, but also as they move between Google's data centers — something we made a top priority after last summer's revelations," Lidzborski wrote.

The NSA has said it only focuses on targets with foreign intelligence value.

A secret Jan. 9, 2013, accounting indicated that NSA sends millions of records every day from Yahoo and Google internal networks to data warehouses at the NSA's Fort Meade, Maryland, headquarters, according to documents released by

Snowden and obtained by The Washington Post last year.

The NSA's principal tool to exploit the Google and Yahoo data links is a project called MUSCULAR, operated jointly with the agency's British counterpart, GCHQ. NSA and GCHQ are copying entire data flows across fiber-optic cables that carry information between the data centers of the Silicon Valley giants, the Post reported. President Barack Obama has promised to consider changing some of the surveillance programs that Snowden disclosed.

But the type of surveillance Google is trying to prevent by improving its encryption technology is not among the reforms Obama has discussed.

Google and other technology companies provide information to the NSA and other government agencies when required by a court order.

"Google is making it tougher for the government to spy on its customers without going through Google," said Chris Soghoian, a senior policy analyst at the American Civil Liberties Union. □

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Tiffany posts 4Q losses due to large arbitration charges

NEW YORK (AP) — Tiffany & Co. posted a loss for its fiscal fourth quarter, dragged down by a hefty charge tied to an unfavorable arbitration ruling. But its sales improved during the critical holiday selling season. Even without the charge, its adjusted earnings missed Wall Street expectations. Its forecast for this year also was short of expectations. Tiffany's shares fell more than 3 percent in Friday premarket trading. For the three months ended Jan. 31, the luxury jewelry company — known for its little blue boxes — lost \$103.6 million, or 81 cents per share. A year earlier it earned \$179.6 million, or \$1.40 per share.

Removing the charge of \$2.27 per share for the unfavorable arbitration ruling, earnings were \$1.47 per share. Analysts surveyed by FactSet expected higher earnings of \$1.51 per share. Tiffany's stock declined \$3.17, or 3.5 percent, to

\$88 in premarket trading two hours before the market open. Revenue climbed 5 percent to \$1.3 billion from \$1.24 billion, led by strong sales of fine and statement jewelry as well as jewelry collections. That matched Wall Street's expectations. Sales increased in the Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe. Sales declined in Japan due to the weaker yen, but climbed on a constant exchange rate basis. Sales at stores open at least a year, a key gauge of a retailer's health, rose 6 percent due to higher sales in all regions. This metric excludes results from stores recently opened or closed. Full-year net income declined 56 percent to \$181.4 million, or \$1.41 per share, from \$416.2 million, or \$3.25 per share, in the previous year. Adjusted earnings were \$3.73 per share. Annual revenue increased 6 percent to \$4.03 billion from \$3.79 billion. □

Yum CEO's pay falls amid KFC struggles in China, elsewhere

CANDICE CHOI
AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Yum CEO David Novak saw his pay package drop 22 percent to \$10 million last year as the parent company of KFC, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut fell short of its performance targets.

The drop in pay from \$12.8 million the previous year was the result of a lower performance-based bonus, reflecting the troubles that have beset the company's important China division.

Yum Brans Inc., based in Louisville, Kentucky, is the biggest Western fast-food operator in China with its KFC restaurants. China has been a critical growth driver for the company, with the unit accounting for about 40 percent of its operating profit.

But in late 2012, a report on Chinese TV said some of Yum's suppliers were giving chickens unapproved levels of antibiotics, touching off sensitivities about food

safety in the country. Sales began to nosedive.

Executives have conceded they were slow to grasp the severity of the backlash before embarking on a marketing campaign to rebuild trust with customers. A few months later, however, the efforts were upended by a bird flu scare.

Beyond those two factors, Yum is also dealing with more competition in the Chinese market.

Back in the U.S., the company's Taco Bell division has been riding on the success of its popular Doritos Locos Tacos. But its KFC and Pizza Hut chains are struggling and saw sales declines at locations open at least a year.

Novak has stressed that China remains a key region for Yum and that the company plans to forge ahead in its expansion plans. The 61-year-old became chief executive in 2000 then took on the chairman title the following year. □

Early gains fade on Wall Street

MATTHEW CRAFT

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — An early surge on the U.S. stock market evaporated Friday, as health care stocks tugged major indexes down. Biotech companies were especially hard-hit after U.S. lawmakers questioned the pricing of a Hepatitis C drug made by Gilead Sciences.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index raced past an all-time high in early trading, then lost steam in the af-

"The only thing that matters is the following: corporate earnings, manufacturing and the consumer. And they've all been solid."

The S&P 500 slipped 5.49 points, or 0.3 percent, to close at 1,866.52 Friday. It traded as high as 1,882 earlier in the day, four points above its record high reached March 7. The Dow Jones industrial average lost 28.28 points, or 0.2 percent, to 16,302.70. The Nasdaq composite dropped 42.50 points, or 1

it could start raising short-term interest rates as soon as next year. Traders drove down prices for gold, government bonds and stocks in anticipation of higher interest rates and borrowing costs.

Those market jitters overshadowed some good news, said Dan Veru, chief investment officer of Palisade Capital Management in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

"If interest rates are going higher it's because the



Trader Christopher Lotito, right, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Friday, March 21, 2014. An early gain on the stock market was mostly gone Friday afternoon, weighed down by biotechnology companies. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

ternoon. It still finished with a solid weekly gain, up 1.4 percent.

It might sound surprising that the stock market is trading near an all-time high with all the uncertainty surrounding China's slowing growth and simmering tensions between Russia and the West. Last week, those concerns were credited with knocking the S&P 500 index down 1.9 percent, its worst weekly loss in nearly two months.

This week investors seemed to return their focus to the basics.

"There are always bad things going on in the world, but they don't all matter to the ultimate direction of markets," said Douglas Coté, chief market strategist at ING U.S. Investment Management.

percent, to 4,276.79.

Health care stocks fell the most in the S&P 500 index. Gilead lost \$3.46, or 5 percent, to \$72.07. Biogen Idec fell \$28.51, or 8 percent, to \$318.53.

Nike fell after warning that a stronger U.S. dollar will dampen its results this quarter. Still, strong demand for its shoes and apparel ahead of the World Cup in June helped it beat analysts' earnings expectations in the previous quarter, the company said late Thursday. Nike, one of the 30 stocks in the Dow, lost \$4.06, or 5 percent, to \$75.21.

Earlier in the week, reports on manufacturing and housing sent the stock market higher. The big stumble came Wednesday, when the Federal Reserve said

economy is doing better," he said, "and that's going to be a good thing for corporate profits. What's so bad about that?"

In other trading Friday, the yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 2.74 percent. Crude oil rose 56 cents to close at \$99.46 a barrel. Gold gained \$5.50 to settle at \$1,336 an ounce.

Among other companies in the news:

— Zions Bancorporation, a regional bank based in Salt Lake City, fell \$1.75, or 5 percent, to \$31.24. Late Thursday, the Fed said Zions was the only one of 30 major U.S. banks that didn't pass an annual "stress test" that determines whether banks have sufficient capital buffers to keep them lending through an economic crisis. □

Third-party hotel booking web sites could mislead consumers

ALINA TUGEND

© 2014 New York Times

This is the situation: Customers lured by promises of great deals book reservations on what appear to be the official websites of hotels. Instead, they've somehow landed on unrelated sites of booking companies whose so-called deals sometimes turn out to be far different from what's available on a hotel's site.

Many people have discovered this practice the hard way. Randy Ratliff, a lawyer in Kentucky; Debbie Greenspan, a hospitality expert in Maryland; and dozens of other people have posted comments online saying they were duped when they thought they were booking rooms on hotel websites, only to wind up fighting credit card charges from companies they had never heard of.

"This is a systemic industry problem," said David Attardi, a vice president of marketing at B.F. Saul Co.'s hotel division, which represents owners of hotels that include InterContinental Hotels and Resorts, Crowne Plaza Suites and Holiday Inns.

Ratliff said he thought he had booked two rooms for two weeks through Comfort Suites' website. He used a different card to pay for the room than he had to reserve it. To his surprise, he found a charge of \$2,279 on the credit card he had initially used to book his reservation.

Ratliff, a lawyer, didn't realize he had inadvertently landed on Easytobook.com, an affiliate of Expedia, and it had charged him in full for the reservation before he even showed up at the hotel.

He disputed the charge and said he was told his money would be refunded within 24 hours. Two weeks later, he was still waiting.

Chicke Fitzgerald, chief executive of Solutionz, a consulting company for the travel industry who also handles RoomStays.com consumer complaints, attributed some of the problems to customers' lack of Web skills. "People just don't understand how online searches work," she said. "The thing I always tell people who complain is that they must pay attention to the URL - it's like a sign outside a store. You must look at what is to the left of the dot-com."

She also said RoomStays.com had processed and closed 117 complaints with the Better Business Bureau over the past three years out of 1.1 million rooms booked.

After being contacted about these complaints, Fitzgerald said RoomStays.com added a new page to its website to give customers a direct route to complain about payment issues.

Becky Wofford, a spokeswoman with Expedia, which nationally has a 42 percent share of the online travel agency market, said the company closely monitored its 7,500 affiliates.

"We work with reputable companies, and we're quite choosy," she said. "If we're receiving complaints about affiliates, we will investigate." She noted that many of the affiliates worked with other agencies such as Priceline and Orbitz; there is no public list of affiliates.

In her three years at Expedia, which also owns Hotels.com and Hotwire.com, among other brands, she said she was aware of only one complaint about any affiliate. Dan Nelson, chief executive of Reservation Counter, an affiliate -or partner, as they're sometimes called - of Priceline, Expedia and Orbitz, that was named in several online consumer complaints, said his company booked 2.7 million rooms annually and received complaints on less than 1 percent a year.

Continued on Page 27

UK's Tesco announces India entry

KAY JOHNSON

AP Business Writer

AHMEDABAD, India (AP) —

British supermarket giant Tesco announced a joint venture in India on Friday with a company owned by Tata Group to invest in a chain of grocery and household goods stores. It is the first multinational entry into India's vast but underserved supermarket sector since the country allowed such investment in

ries.

Other major international multi-brand retailers have stayed out of India's \$400 billion market in retailing — despite its huge potential for growth with a population of 1.2 billion people who now shop mostly at small family-owned stores. Most have cited strict local-sourcing rules they say make doing business in India too difficult.

In a politically sensitive

business partner last year and shelved plans to open its own stores, saying it could not meet the local sourcing rules and make a profit. Tesco, Britain's largest retailer by sales, focuses heavily on food and groceries that are easier to buy from small Indian suppliers. It has since 2008 been running a wholesale business to supply goods and technical knowledge to Trent Hypermarket.



A sign of British supermarket giant Tesco supermarket is seen at a branch in Purley, south London. Tesco announced a joint venture in India on Friday with a company owned by Tata Group to invest in a chain of grocery and household goods stores.

(AP Photo/Sang Tan)

2012.

Tesco said in a statement it would invest 85 million pounds (\$140 million) to take a 50 percent share of Tata-owned Trent Hypermarket Ltd., which operates the Star Bazaar chain. It said the chain would operate 12 stores in southern and western India selling food and groceries, home and personal products, plus fashion and accesso-

move, India last year gave the green light for international companies to open multi-brand retail stores, but to allay concerns about the impact on small traders and family-run shops, those companies must obtain 30 percent of their products from local small and medium-sized businesses.

The world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart, prominently split from its Indian busi-

The Tata Group, owner of Trent Hypermarket, is one of India's largest and best-known conglomerates. Its more than 100 companies include Tata Motors, owner of the Jaguar-Land Rover brand; Tata Steel; Tata Consultancy Services; Tata Beverages, the maker of Tetley brand tea; and holdings in insurance, investment and telecommunications. □

BlackBerry selling most Canadian land

NEW YORK (AP) — BlackBerry is selling most of its real estate holdings in Canada as the struggling smartphone company continues to look for ways to improve its business.

BlackBerry Ltd. did not disclose the buyer or purchase price, but said Friday that it will sell more than 3 million square feet (0.28 million square meters) of space and vacant lands. It will also lease back part of the space.

"The successful sale of property in Canada will help us move toward our goal of continued opera-

tional efficiency," CEO and Executive Chair John Chen said in a statement.

The company had announced in January that it planned to sell the majority of its Canadian real estate holdings. BlackBerry pioneered the smartphone in 1999 and dominated for years, but since the late 2000s the company has been hammered by competition from the iPhone as well as Android-based rivals. Under Chen — who took on the CEO post permanently late last year — BlackBerry has been working to turn around its busi-

ness. Chen said that BlackBerry is still committed to having a strong presence in Canada. It is keeping its headquarters in Waterloo, Ontario. The company said that more terms of the transaction will be announced once principal conditions are satisfied or waived by the parties.

The deal is expected to close in the first quarter of fiscal 2015.

BlackBerry's stock rose 13 cents, or 1.4 percent, to \$9.55 in morning trading Friday. Its shares are up more than 32 percent over the past three months. □

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

2	1	6				3	9	
4	8		5			2	1	
						3		
8	3	7	4	2				
7								
1	5		4			6	8	
4	6		5	1	7			

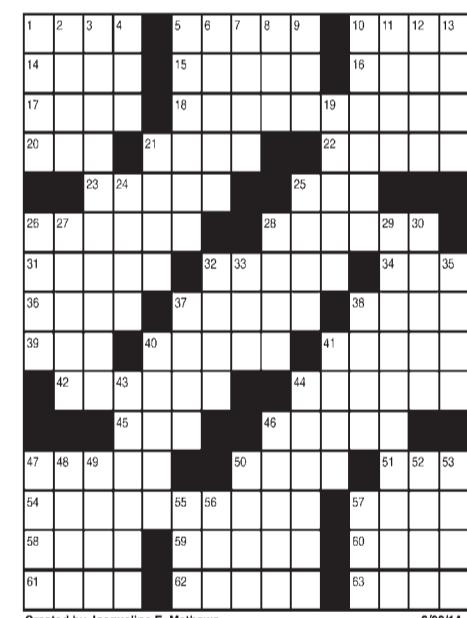
Difficulty Level ★★★★

3/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

1	5	4	6	2	7	3	9	8
8	7	6	9	3	4	5	2	1
2	3	9	1	5	8	7	4	6
5	9	3	2	4	1	8	6	7
4	1	8	7	6	3	9	5	2
6	2	7	8	9	5	1	3	4
7	6	2	3	8	9	4	1	5
3	8	5	4	1	2	6	7	9
9	4	1	5	7	6	2	8	3

Yesterday's puzzle answer



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/22/14

Friday's Puzzle Solved

BUM	CAPER	EYES
A S A P	A L I V E	L O G O
H E R R	N O T E S	E R G O
S T E A D F A S T	V E S T	
S P O T	A G E	
E R A S E R	B O T A N I S T	
L O D E S	D I V E S	C U R
A V I D	P O S E D	T I R E
T E E	A R D O R	C O N G A
E R U P T I O N	P U R G E D	
H E M	N O R M	
S A G A	A B S O R B E N T	
O W E S	T A C I T	N O O K
L A N E	E R O S E	T A M E
D Y E D	S E W E R	H E N

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- 5 USMC member
6 Actress Procter
7 Zip
8 Used a shovel
9 Yrbk. section
10 Polite and polished
11 Wedding cake layer
12 Friendly nation
13 Satan's domain
19 Clay brick material
21 Group of quails
24 British noble
25 Money owed
26 Guitarist Atkins
27 Embankment
28 Comfy wraparound
29 Title for some police officers
30 Laziness
32 Stick one's lower lip out
33 Groove
35 Patella's place
37 Prescribed amount
38 Proper; stuffy
40 Sturdy bolt
41 Radar screen image
43 Dumb & klutzy
44 Cognac
46 Die, slangily
47 Grump
48 Rescuer
49 Performs
50 Husband for Kate Middleton
52 One's time; wait
53 Clippety-
55 Donkey
56 Greek "T"
57 Public transport

Third-party hotel booking web sites could mislead consumers

Continued from Page 25

Reservation Counter's logo appears on every page of its websites, Nelson said, and all information is transparent and clear. But, he said, the online booking world can be confusing, with constantly changing inventory, a large number of online providers - some of them rogue companies - and consumers who have differing levels of comfort with searching the Internet. And Cindy Estis Green, chief executive of Kalibri Labs, which provides analytics to the hotel industry about online marketing and distribution, cautioned that the cost of one hotel room can vary widely depending on supply and demand. Like airline seats, how much a hotel room costs and whether full payment is required at the time of a reservation is constantly in flux, she said. Estis Green said common consumer complaints were about confusing, inadequate information regarding rates and restrictions on these sites.

"It may not be fraud, but it's absolutely consumer deception," she said. Bill McGee, a travel and aviation consultant for Consumers Union, the policy and action division of Consumer Reports, said details might indeed be somewhere on the websites but were often in tiny font size or buried deeply

within the fine print. "We're just very unhappy about how things are disclosed," he said. The Federal Trade Commission said it was not aware of any pending cases concerning this particular issue.

Angry consumers, like Greenspan, often take complaints directly to the hotel and on social media. Greenspan, who has worked in the hotel business for 25 years and taught a hospitality course at Cornell University, said she called what she thought was an 800 number for Marriott.

"I was switched to the reservation center and kept asking if it was a Marriott," she said. "I was told, 'I can book you a room for Marriott.'?"

She didn't realize she was talking to a call center for Hotels.com, owned by Expedia; she learned when she called the hotel to cancel the reservation.

But her card had already been charged, and she couldn't get a refund.

"I'll admit I was very tired and stressed, but I think it's very deceitful how the third party position themselves so it appears you're contacting the hotel," she said. McGee said such problems were another good reason to always pay online with a credit card, because unlike with a debit card or money order, you can dispute the charges through the bank. □

Classifieds



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GOLD Season
OS \$10k OV \$9500
Oceanfront \$17k
3 BEDRM OV \$17,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

Platinum 2B OV \$18k
Oceanfront PLAT \$29k
Platinum 1B OV \$11,500
Gold season 2B OV \$9,000
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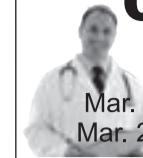
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25 years later, Exxon Valdez spill effects linger

DAN JOLING

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— Before the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico, there was the Exxon Valdez disaster in Alaska, at the time the largest oil spill in the U.S. The 987-foot (300-meter) tanker, carrying 53 million gallons (200 million liters) of crude, struck Bligh Reef at 12:04 a.m. on March 24, 1989. Within hours, it unleashed an estimated 10.8 million gallons (40 million liters) of thick, toxic crude oil into the water. Storms and currents then smeared it over 1,300 miles (2092.05 million kilometers) of shoreline.

For a generation of people around the world, the spill was seared into their memories by images of fouled coastline in Prince William Sound, of sea otters, herring and birds soaked in oil, of workers painstakingly washing crude off the rugged beaches.

Twenty five years later, most of the species have recovered, said Robert Spies, a chief science adviser to governments on



In this April 9, 1989 file photo, crude oil from the tanker Exxon Valdez, top, swirls on the surface of Alaska's Prince William Sound near Naked Island.

Associated Press

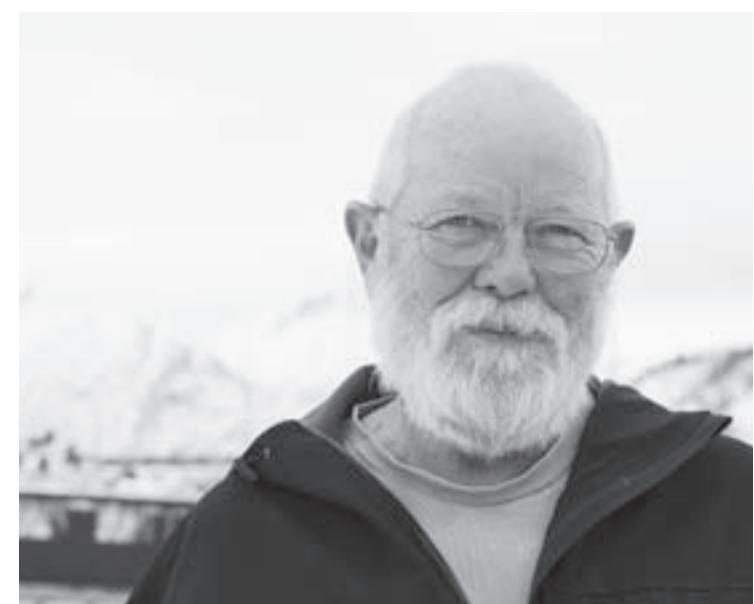


In this photo taken Feb. 26, 2014, fisherman Bernie Culbertson poses in Valdez, Alaska. Culbertson was preparing to fish cod when the Exxon Valdez ran aground in March 1989.

Associated Press

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In this photo taken Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014, is a sea otter in the bay near the ferry dock in Valdez, Alaska.

Associated Press

compensation checks, minus what fishermen earned on spill work, arrived too late for many.

The fisheries today are not the same. "The shrimp are slowly, slowly coming back. The crab aren't back. The herring aren't back. The salmon are back in abundance," he said.

—INDUSTRY

At the time of the spill, complacency among government officials and the oil industry had set in after a dozen years of safe shipments, said Mark Swanson, director of the Prince William Sound Regional Citizens Advisory Council and a former Coast Guard officer.

When the tanker ran aground, for instance, spill response equipment was buried under snow. Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. in 1989 had 13 oil skimmers, five miles (eight kilometers) of boom and storage capacity for 220,000 gallons (832,800 liters) of spilled oil. Now,

Alyeska has 108 skimmers, 49 miles (80 kilometers) of boom and on-water storage capacity of almost 38 million gallons. North Slope oil must be transported in double-hull tankers, which must be escorted by two tugs. Radar monitors the vessel's position as well as that of icebergs.

The company conducts two major spill drills are conducted each year. And nearly 400 local fishing boat owners are trained to deploy and maintain

boom

—PACIFIC HERRING

After the spill, the population of herring crashed. It is now listed as "not recovering." The silvery fish is a key species because it is eaten by salmon, seabirds and marine mammals from otters to whales.

Four years after the spill, the estimated herring population based on modeling shrunk from 120 metric tons to less than 30 metric tons. How that happened remains a question, said Scott Pegau, research program manager for the Oil Spill Recovery Institute in Cordova, Alaska.

Here's what's known: Adult herring feed on zooplankton, which crashed for three years after the spill. With less to eat, herring may have been more susceptible to disease normally fended off within a herring population.

Herring populations can stabilize at a low or high number, but something has prevented a rebound. Oil likely is no longer a factor, Pegau said.

—SEA OTTERS

Responders estimated that as many as 3,000 sea otters died the first year. Hundreds more died in the years after of exposure to oil that persisted in sediment, where otters dig for clams.

Three factors could have had an impact on the otters' ability to survive. Oiled fur loses insulating value. Otters ingest oil as they groom. □

Disney inviting 'small world' sing-along videos

NEW YORK (AP) — Disney on Friday launched a website to create a global sing-along for "it's a small world," marking 50 years since the classic attraction with the unforgettable ear-worm of a song opened at the 1964 World's Fair in New York.

The "it's a small world" ride became a centerpiece of Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., in 1966, and the famous song still plays in a continuous loop at "small world" rides in Disney parks. The new website, <http://www.SmallWorld50.com>, invites the public to submit videos of themselves singing the song. Fans can also create virtual dolls on the site, mixing and matching faces, clothes and other elements to build a unique avatar-like figure.

Walt Disney wanted the music and lyrics to be catchy and easy for kids to sing, but some adults find the tune inexplicably

maddening, lodging in the brain for hours after emerging from the 12-minute boat ride.

The original "small world" attraction was billed in 1964 as "a salute to UNICEF and all the world's children." To mark the 50th, Disney is donating \$150,000 to UNICEF and will donate another \$1 for each video and doll posted or shared on SmallWorld50.com or related social media, up to \$100,000.

The World's Fair opened April 22, 1964 in Flushing Meadows Park in Queens. Its wonders included the culinary marvel "Bel-Gem Waffles," with strawberries and whipped cream; technological innovations like microwave ovens and computers; and exhibits ranging from Michelangelo's "Pieta" in the Vatican Pavilion to Disney's animatronic figure of Abe Lincoln giving a speech.

The fair hosted more than



This 1964 photo released by Disney shows Walt Disney with a model of the "it's a small world" attraction from the 1964 World's Fair.

51 million visitors over two years. A 12-story-tall steel globe called the Unisphere still marks the place where the fair was held in Queens. Local officials also plan activities to commemorate the anniversary of the fair. The SmallWorld50.com site

launched with a video of singers from 25 countries performing the song. On April 10, a live sing-along will be held at Disneyland and Disney World, and will be paired with sing-alongs recorded earlier in the day from other Disney parks,

to air on "Good Morning America" along with others singing snippets of the song. Disney does not capitalize 'it's a small world,' and a photo of a sign for the ride from the '64 fair shows no capital letters were used then either. □

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In Bible epic revival, 'Noah' finds rough seas

JAKE COYLE

AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — In the beginning of their work together on "Noah," director Darren Aronofsky made Russell Crowe a promise: "I'll never shoot you on a houseboat in a robe and sandals with two giraffes popping up behind you." Decades after Cecil B. DeMille's "The Ten Commandments" and "Ben-Hur," Aronofsky has renewed the tradition of the studio-made, mass-audience Bible epic, albeit as a distinctly darker parable about sin, justice and mercy. While much of his "Noah" is true to Scripture, it's nothing like the picture-book version many encounter as children.

"The first time I read it, I got scared," the director says. "I thought, 'What if I'm not good enough to get on the boat?'"

It's an altogether unlikely project: a \$130 million Bible-based studio film made by a widely respected filmmaker ("Black Swan," "Requiem for a Dream") few would have pegged as a modern-day DeMille. In the lead-up to its March 28th release, "Noah" has been flooded by contro-



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows director Darren Aronofsky, left, and actor Russell Crowe on the set of, "Noah."

Associated Press

versy, with some religious conservatives claiming it isn't literal enough to the Old Testament and that Noah has been inaccurately made, as Aronofsky has called him, "the first environmentalist."

"Noah" is a culmination of the shift brought on by Mel Gibson's independently produced "The Passion of the Christ," which awak-

ened Hollywood with its unforeseen \$612 million box office haul in 2004. In the time since, Hollywood has carefully developed closer ties to faith-based communities, (Sony and 20th Century Fox have set up faith-based studios targeting evangelicals). Yet the debate about "Noah" proves that it can be tricky to satisfy both be-

lievers and non-believers, and that finding the right intersection of art, commerce and religion is a task loaded with as much risk as potential reward.

A lot is at stake, and not just for "Noah" and distributor Paramount Pictures. In December, Fox will release Ridley Scott's "Exodus," starring Christian Bale as Moses.

On the heels of the recently released "Son of God," the religious drama "God's Not Dead" opened Friday and Sony is releasing the less straightforwardly Biblical "Heaven Is for Real" ahead of Easter next month. The studio is also developing a vampire twist on Cain and Able with Will Smith. In Lionsgate's pipeline is a Mary Magdalene film, hyped as a prequel to "The Passion of the Christ" and co-produced by mega-church pastor Joel Osteen.

When Jonathan Boch started his company Grace Hill Media in 2000 to consult Hollywood studios on reaching the faith community, the two "really didn't know each other," he says. Since then, films like "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and "The Blind Side" have benefited from outreach to churchgoers.

"Over the course of those 15 years, you've seen the faith community go from almost pariah status or fly-over status to now being seen as an important market," says Boch, who consulted on "Noah." "In my mind, what we're seeing is another renaissance where the greatest artists are telling the greatest stories every told."

Though Hollywood largely swore off the Bible epic when films like 1965's "The Greatest Story Ever Told" flopped, the revival dovetails recent trends. Figures like Noah are globally recognizable, and thus easier to market. They come with no licensing fee, and, often, plenty opportunity for flashy special effects.

"Noah," which is being released in converted 3-D overseas, is perhaps the oldest apocalypse story.

The story fascinated Aronofsky as a Jewish kid growing up in Brooklyn. He recalls a poem he wrote about the tale as a 13-year-old—and a teacher's subsequent encouragement—as his birth as a storyteller. Whereas "The Passion of the Christ" was largely made by Christians and for Christians, Aronofsky says his "Noah" (which was advertised during the Super Bowl) is "for everybody."

"It's wrong when you talk about the Noah story to talk about it in that type of believer-nonbeliever way because I think it's one of humanity's oldest stories," he says. "It belongs not just in the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition. Everyone on the planet knows the Noah story."

The Genesis story is only a few pages, with more details on the dimensions of the ark (which Aronofsky held to) than who Noah was. He's instructed by God—"grieved" in his heart by what mankind had become generations after creation—to build an ark and fill it with two of every animal. After the flood, Noah is referred to as drunk and then banishes his son, Ham—all clues for Aronofsky on the pain of Noah's burden. □

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West cover Vogue magazine

NEW YORK (AP) — Kanye West's campaign to get fiancee Kim Kardashian on the cover of Vogue magazine has finally paid off. They appear in a photo by Annie Leibovitz on the April issue. The photo shows Kardashian wearing a white wedding-style dress with West's arms around her. She posted it on her official Twitter and Instagram accounts saying: "This is such a dream come true!!!" West wrote "Thank you @ voguemagazine" on his Twitter account.

West has said he believed Kardashian is cover-worthy. In a radio interview with Ryan Seacrest last October, he said "there's no way Kim Kardashian shouldn't be on the cover

of Vogue." He also said Kardashian was more influential than first lady Michelle Obama in her clothing choices.

However, in the magazine, which hits stands March 31, Vogue editor in chief Anna Wintour told readers it was the magazine's idea to feature Kardashian, and the decision was based on the reality starlet's dominance—and was not influenced by her famous boyfriend.

"You may have read that Kanye begged me to put his fiancee on Vogue's cover," Wintour wrote. "He did nothing of the sort. The gossip might make for better reading, but the simple fact of the matter is that it isn't true."



This cover image taken by Annie Leibovitz for Vogue shows the April 2014 issue of the high fashion magazine featuring rapper Kanye West and TV personality Kim Kardashian. Associated Press

The couple are the parents of 9-month-old daughter North. □

Another Tale of Two Cities



MAUREEN DOWD
© 2014 New York Times

LOS ANGELES - The tremors may have had morning TV anchors diving under the desk, but it takes more than a 4.4 quiver to rattle Eric Garcetti.

"I don't lose my head," said the Democratic mayor of Los Angeles, who was in bed with his wife, Amy Wakeland, when the earthquake struck at dawn Monday. "I've always kind of enjoyed the small ones. The small ones are kind of fun." He said dryly that it was 10 minutes before they remembered to check on their 2-year-old daughter. He did check in with "Earthquake Lucy," as he calls seismologist Lucy Jones, an expert on loan from the U.S. Geological Survey, who told him that it was a new fault line under the Santa Monica Mountains and that there was only a 5 percent chance that it would usher in a bigger quake later that day. Garcetti was so unconcerned that he went to Tom Bergin's pub for St. Paddy's Day and played bartender for two hours, even though Irish is the one ethnicity he's not, and he ended up with a bit of a hangover. There was some grumbling that the mayor was too invisible Monday morning, that he should have used the shake to shake people out of the complacency that has set in since the \$42 billion, magnitude 6.7 quake in Northridge that left 57 dead in 1994. Critics say that City Hall has its own version of "Where's Waldo?" called "Anyone Seen Eric?"

"He's so low profile," said one TV writer. "He's harder to find than Flight 370." The doubters concede that the 43-year-old former city councilman and son of Gil Garcetti, the O.J. prosecutor, is bright, charming and multifaceted: a salsa-dancing, jazz-piano-playing Rhodes Scholar who grew up in the Valley in a Brady Bunch world, mingling Jewish, Italian and Mexican heritage. ("The guilt must cancel out," the mayor laughs, "because I live my life with very little guilt.") Critics say that Garcetti's most vivid move in office so far - working for one day at a red metal table in a parking lot in Boyle Heights, a Latino neighborhood - was a stunt that only a high school class president would deem clever. The soft-spoken Garcetti did speak out about the earthquake, warning Angelenos to be more vigilant, including at a breakfast interview sponsored by Los Angeles Magazine on Tuesday; he just did it in what he calls his "calm and grounded" way. He is confident that his "back-to-basics" approach is reaping benefits, despite criticism in L.A. Weekly last month that he's off to a slow start and struggling to find

an agenda. He says he wants to be "humble" as he helps the city restore its "hustle," and, to that end, he recently made a cup of coffee for a startled Chinese construction mogul who could bring business here.

He has been a stark contrast to New York's new Democratic mayor, Bill de Blasio, who has been highly visible but abrasive and obsessive about one cause: funding a pre-K program by taxing the wealthy. While de Blasio came to power belittling Michael Bloomberg's tenure, Garcetti went to Manhattan before he was sworn in eight months ago to seek out Bloomberg's advice.

"I pull some of the metric-based leadership from Bloomberg," he said, during an interview at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, in a room covered in Spanish tile that served as the first locale for a fledgling little event called the Academy Awards. But he stressed that he also thinks it's really important "to connect emotionally."

While de Blasio has been publicly battling Gov. Andrew Cuomo on raising taxes and closing charter schools, Garcetti has been quietly and amiably working with Gov. Jerry Brown on climate change and on providing tax inducements that would stem the exodus of film and TV production companies to Louisiana and Canada.

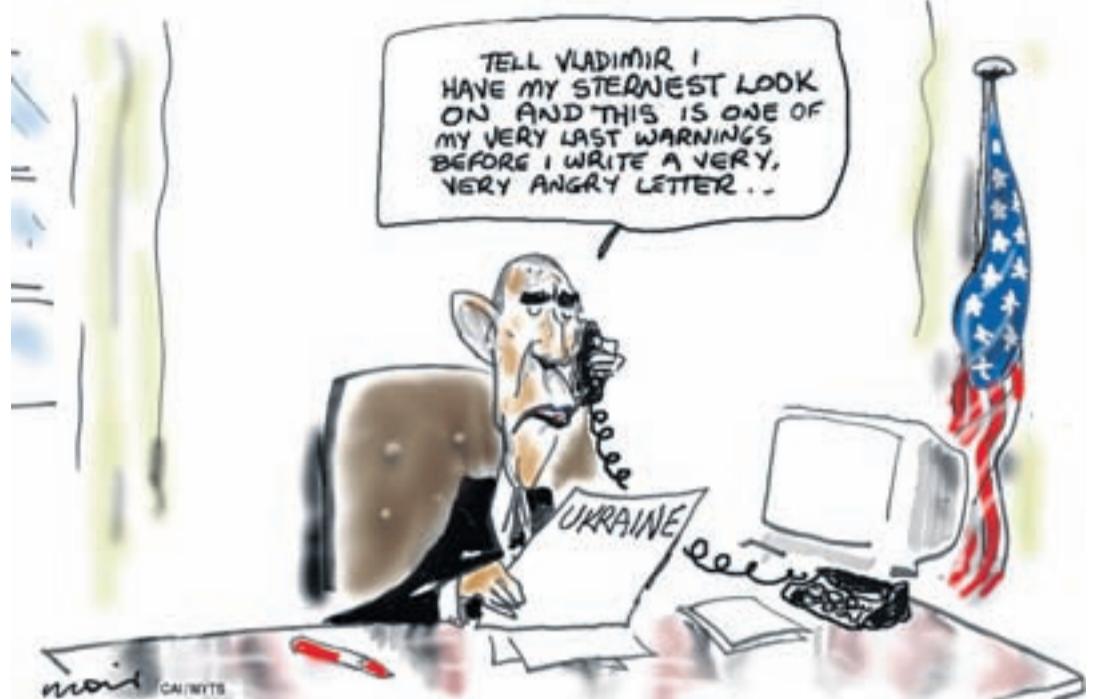
Garcetti recalled that Brown told him over dinner, "You only have a few chances to really communicate. Don't waste them."

"I'm not that interested in a bunch of flash early on," Garcetti said, noting that you have to build a team, figure out your style and "find a narrative for your city."

While de Blasio is seen as a captive of unions and foe of business, Garcetti has pushed back against the powerful public works employees' union and reached out to business. "He's much more of a Bloomberg mayor than a de Blasio mayor," said one prominent CEO here. "He clearly understands the need to partner with us and not bash us." The grand hope of liberals that de Blasio would turn New York into a lab for populist government theories has faded, as that stumbling mayor's disapproval rating has more than doubled since January. Ben White and Maggie Haberman wrote Tuesday in Politico that there is a determined backlash by the 1 percent against class-based appeals on income inequality and soaking the rich, dubbed the ineffective "politics of envy" by Larry Summers. Garcetti says he empathizes with de Blasio on the steep learning curve at a breathless pace and is glad he has no "snow politics."

"I share Bill's sense of social justice in urban centers, but I realize that the job of mayor is to fix things," he said. "We're not running for president. We're not writing self-help books. We are people who first and foremost have to take care of the basics."

He said that he and de Blasio both have to get used to being chief executives. So far, Garcetti likes it. "It feels like you had on an off-the-rack suit," he said, smiling, "and then you get a custom-made one." □



TV Lowers the Birthrate (Seriously)



NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF
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In the struggle to break cycles of poverty, experts have been searching for decades for ways to lower America's astronomical birthrate among teenagers.

We've tried virginity pledges, condoms and sex education. And, finally, we have a winner, a tool that has been remarkably effective in cutting teenage births.

It's "16 and Pregnant," a reality show on MTV that has been a huge hit, spawning spinoffs like the "Teen Mom" franchise. These shows remind youthful viewers that babies cry and vomit, scream in the middle of the night and poop with abandon.

Tweets containing the words "birth control" increased by 23 percent on the day after each new episode of "16 and Pregnant," according to an analysis by Melissa Kearney of the University of Maryland and Phillip B. Levine of Wellesley College. Those tweets, in turn, correlate to increased Google searches along the lines of "how get birth control pills."

Kearney and Levine find that regions with a higher audience for "16 and Pregnant" and the "Teen Mom" franchise had more of a drop in teenage births. Overall, their statistical analysis concludes that the shows reduced teenage births by 5.7 percent, or 20,000 fewer teenage births each year. That's one birth averted every half-hour.

To put that achievement in context, I've been fulminating about the teenage birthrate for years, and I don't think I've averted a single birth.

Because abortion rates fell at the same time, the reduced birthrate appears to be the result principally of more use of contraception. It's also a reminder of the paramount need for clinics that offer free, long-acting contraception: When a teenage girl searches the web for birth control, let's make sure she finds solutions.

Kearney and Levine, both economists, are experts in why teenage birthrates are so high in America (one factor: Teenage births reflect poverty as well as transmit it to the next generation). U.S. girls are almost 10 times as likely to have babies as Swiss girls, and more than twice as likely as Canadian girls. In no other developed country are teenagers as likely to get pregnant as the United States.

But here's the good news: Teenage birthrates have plunged by 52 percent since 1991 - one of America's great social policy successes, coming even as inequality and family breakdown have worsened. The steady drop in teenage births accelerated greatly beginning in 2009, when MTV began airing "16 and Pregnant."

"It's another reminder that great storytelling can be a powerful catalyst for change," says Stephen K. Friedman, the president of MTV.

By all accounts, the MTV shows worked because they focused on compelling stories, not on lecturing or wagging fingers.

"If the government tried this, it would have a good message, but three people would watch it," Levine said.

Middle-class Americans tend to think of contraception in terms of condoms or pills, but just as critical is a girl having a prospect of a better life if she delays childbearing. Kearney and Levine find that one of the factors in the

long-term decline in teenage births is the improvement in job possibilities for women.

For example, girls who were randomly assigned to attend Promise Academy, a middle school in Harlem Children's Zone, were less likely to become pregnant because they were also more likely to excel and have a shot at college.

As a haughty journalistic scribbler, I tend to look down on television, so it's a bit painful to acknowledge its potential for good. But the evidence is overwhelming.

A careful study by Robert Jensen of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Emily Oster of the University of Chicago found that before television arrived in Indian villages, traditional attitudes ruled: Women had to get a man's permission to leave the house, and 62 percent of women said it was acceptable for husbands to beat wives. Then villagers watched Indian soap operas with middle-class urban families in which women aren't beaten and leave the home freely. These norms infiltrated the village, and the arrival of television turned out to be equivalent, in nurturing more egalitarian attitudes, to five years of female education.

The master of injecting causes into storytelling is Neal Baer, the television producer behind "ER" and "Law and Order: Special Victims Unit." Baer, a doctor who helps lead the Global Media Center for Social Impact at UCLA's school of public health, wove issues like vaccination and rape-kit testing into his shows, raising awareness in ways that no news program could. Polling showed that one "ER" episode about cervical cancer doubled the audience's awareness of links between the human papillomavirus and cervical cancer. Some more good news. After a hiatus, MTV will introduce season five of "16 and Pregnant" on April 29. Family planning clinics had better stock up! □

Turkish attempt to ban Twitter appears to backfire

SUZAN FRASER

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkey's attempt to block access to Twitter appeared to backfire on Friday with many tech-savvy users circumventing the ban and suspicions growing that the prime minister was using court orders to suppress corruption allegations against him and his government.

Turkey's telecommunications authority said it had blocked access to the social media network hours after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to "rip out the roots" of the website. Tweets have proliferated with links to recordings that appear to incriminate him and other top officials in corruption.

Lutfi Elvan, Turkey's minister in charge of transport and communications, said Turkey was merely obeying court orders — although an Istanbul lawyers group argued the court decisions were about blocking access to parts of websites deemed to be violating privacy — not entire websites.

Turkey in the past has blocked access to YouTube, but this is the first ban on Twitter, which is hugely popular in the country — to the point where Turkish hashtags routinely appear in global trends. The social network was instrumental in organizing flash protests against the government last year.

By midday Friday, tweets were continuing unabated as users swapped instructions online on how to change settings. One enterprising user spread the word by defacing Turkish election posters with instructions on beating censors.

President Abdullah Gul was among those who circumvented the order, which he contested in a series of tweets. Gul, once a political ally of Erdogan, has spoken out against Internet censorship in the past, although last month he approved government moves to tighten controls

over the Internet.

"I hope this implementation won't last long," he wrote.

Links to leaked recordings have been popping up on two Turkish Twitter accounts, including one in which a voice resembling Erdogan's instructs his son to dispose of large

searcher at Britain's Oxford Internet Institute, said the ban appeared to be working through Domain Name System — or DNS — blocking, which was easy to work around. He said many Twitter-hungry Turks manually changed the DNS settings on their computers and

our users in Turkey who rely on Twitter as a vital communications platform. We hope to have full access returned soon."

European Commission Vice President Neelie Kroes criticized the Twitter ban in Turkey — a country that is seeking to join the European Union — as "groundless,

and the confidentiality of private lives" and said access would be restored only when Twitter removes illegal content.

"Turkey is not a country that bans the Internet," Elvan said. "We have to stand together against insults and unlawfulness."

Technology Minister Fikri Isik



Members of the Turkish Youth Union hold cartoons depicting Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan during a protest against a ban on Twitter, in Ankara, Turkey, Friday, March 21, 2014. Turkey's attempt to block access to Twitter appeared to backfire on Friday with many tech-savvy users circumventing the ban and suspicions growing that the prime minister was using court orders to suppress corruption allegations against him and his government. Cartoon in center reads: Erdogan, left, to his Ankara Mayor Melih Gokcek "we will rip out the roots of Twitter." Gokcek: "don't say it."

(AP Photo/Burhan Ozbilici)

amounts of cash from a residence amid a police graft investigation. Erdogan, who denies corruption, said the recording was fabricated and part of a plot by followers of an influential U.S.-based Muslim cleric to discredit the government before March 30 local elections.

"Prime Minister Erdogan's move spells the lengths he will go to censor the flood of politically damaging wiretap recordings circulating on social media," said Emma Sinclair-Webb, senior Turkey researcher at Human Rights Watch.

Andrew Przybylski, a re-

in their phones to point to Google's Domain Name System, which isn't affected by the ban.

Earlier, many users trying to access the network instead saw a notice from Turkey's telecommunications authority, citing four court orders.

Turkey's lawyers' association asked a court to overturn the ban, arguing it was unconstitutional and violated Turkish and European human rights laws.

Turkey's main opposition party also applied for a cancellation.

Twitter's @policy account tweeted: "We stand with

pointless, cowardly."

White House press secretary Jay Carney said Washington had conveyed "serious concern" to the Turkish government and said it supported the "people of Turkey in their calls to restore access to the blocked technologies."

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said: "Actions like this are contrary to Turkey's own expressed desire to be a model of democracy, to uphold the highest standards of democracy." The telecommunications authority accused Twitter of violating "personal rights

said officials were holding talks with Twitter and that the ban would be lifted if an agreement is reached. The original source of the leaked recordings is unclear.

The ban comes amid rumors and news reports that even more damaging recordings are about to emerge.

In Berlin, the German government's human rights commissioner, Christoph Strässer, called on Turkey to reverse the decision immediately. Britain's Foreign Office said social media had a "vital role to play" in modern democracy. □